A

Rational discourse

CONCERNING

PRAYER:

ITS

NATURE and KINDS.

CHIEFLY

Of *MYSTICK CONTEMPLATION*, the most perfect Action of

CHRISTIAN LIFE.

A Translation.

Printed in the Year 1669.

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THE TRANSLATOR TO THE READER.

THe Title which names this Book, ought not to make thee expect a Syſtem either of Vocal Prayers ſuited to every occaſion, or of thoſe conſiderations which uſe to be the ſubjects and groundwork of the Mental. It flies a higher pitch. Prayer, *in its whole latitude, is its object; and 'tis, as it were, the* Science *of it; fetching, firſt, its Nature, Neceſſity and Profit, from the very Eſſence of the perſons that pray; then, from that perfectly known, deriving its ſeveral ways or Kinds, and the common Rules peculiar to each. Much of it tranſcends ordinary capacities, being an Imitation of that Wiſdome which* S. Paul *us'd to ſpeak amongſt the* Perfect; *yet its agreeableneſs to mans Nature is ſo*

laid open, that; though the deepeſt wit will find it profound enough to dive in, yet the ſhallower may ſoard it in many places, and, not feel indeed, as the other, but yet by a little bending of their eyes admiringly, ſee even to its very bottom. The fruit to be hop't from it by all that pray, thoſe eſpecially that guide others, is the ſame that we experience in other parts of Humane Life from thoſe Supreme Principles to which they bear a ſubordination; which, every mean Speculator knows, give both thoſe diſcourſes and Actions all their ſteadineſs and ſolidity. Atheiſm, *whoſe Drollery againſt Chriſtianity is chiefly built on the Metaphorical expreſſions, found in Scripture, and the language of vulgar Chriſtians, which that Sect miſconceit to be meant literally, will be at a loſs to find in this one inſtance, that very method of oppoſing it ſhown perfectly irrational: diſcovering here how connected with eviденteſt principles, and how unreproveable Prayer, underſtood according to the literal truth, is; and how excellently Noble in it ſelf, as fixing our underſtanding and will upon an Object infinitely glorious, and dignifying thoſe Powers accordingly; and yet withall how highly wiſe it is that becauſe*

ſuch

such lofty Conceptions far surmount the capacities of the vulgar, they should be familiariz'd to them by the disguize of such notions and expressions as they are apt to comprehend; which is in this Treatise most learnedly explicated; And, were every single piece of Christianity so rationally clear'd from the nature of the First Being, and those of his respective Creatures, all objections against Christian Doctrine would be strangled in their birth. Enthusiasm, *the other Extreme of our distemper'd Age, which springs from not distinguishing the exorbitant motions of Fancy, from the solid and comprehensive sights of Reason elevated to the noblest Objects, finds here its proper Cure. This Touchstone differences the Gold from the Dross, and resolves into their first principles, the ayr of Imagination, all Productions of our mind, (how spiritual, sublime, and heavenly soever they seem) which have not the Nature of things for their Basis, and rightly-drawn consequences for the Method of their building; since none else partake His nature, who is Essential Truth. More utilities of this little piece I might reckon up; but 'tis needless, when I can name one which comprises all:*

'Tis

'Tis this; Its whole design is a directly-levell'd aim at Heaven, or a Compendium of the way thither; and who would not follow a Guide that leads him not one step about? Live happy, and ever.

ERRATA.

Page 7. line 17. strains towards, p. 34. l. 1. be not, p. 44. l. 28. 'tis evident, p. 54. l. 26. aspire to, p. 59. l. 16. his own, p. 86. l. 17. naught, p. 92. l. 9. to transfer, p. 124. l. 27. blind *impetus*, p. 135. l. 23. dresses, p. 169. l. 22. Excrement to.

OF PRAYER.

First Book.
Of the Essence, Degrees, and proper Action of a Christian.

CHAP. I.
Of the Nature of Christian Life.

§. 1. CONsidering with my self what a kind of Life that of a Christian is, this presently occurrs; That

though there are more call'd *Men* than *Christians*, yet none bears the Name of a *Christian*, who is not also a *Man*; and, by consequence, the title of Man is more universal than that of Christian, and this is comprehended under that; and Christian Life is a certain Humane Life, or *such a* Life of Man. This same is manifested by looking into Christian Life: wherein, whilst I see that all the Acts proper to Christians are humane, and govern'd like the rest of humane Acts, by Design and Election; I dare not conceit Christian Life to be adopted and borrow'd from some other Nature, but purely a certain *species*, or manner of Humane Life.

§. 2. This obliges me to contemplate Humane Nature: For, if that be unknown, the Nature of a Christian can never be clear; this being no other than a certain quality of Humane Nature. Nor can it escape an eye surveying Humane Nature, that This consists in the principle of Reasoning: For, whatever we Men do, as excelling other Animals, from whose crowd we are sever'd, all proceeds from Reason: Thoughts, Discourses, Writings, Productions of Art,

Disci-

Disciplines. Now, Reasoning is that by which the Mind, by little and little, is carry'd on from what it knew before, to new knowledges; of which progress we discover no other limit, than where there's no longer any connexion of the things without us to our selves, that is, to our Senses, (which serve us for Nets, into which fall and are intangled for us, whatever can strike them) and to those things which through our senses have already become ours, or as it were Members of us.

§. 3. 'Tis clear, consequently, that Humane Nature is not satisfied, so long as any of these is unknown; as also that none of these is known as becomes Humane Nature, till it settles so in Man, that this be fix'd in him, that the thing exists, and cannot possibly but exist, as it appears to him, and *why* this is impossible. Nay, if a man see that *B* is, and cannot not-be, because *A* is; yet sees not why *A* cannot not-be; he is not yet satisfied that *B* is. Of those things, therefore, whereof one is from another, either the first must be known; or nothing can be so known as to yield satisfaction. Wherefore, since, of all made-

things, there's none which is not refer'd to ſomething unmade, as the Firſt, whence it receives Exiſtence: 'tis plain, that Man knows nothing to his ſatisfaction, who knows not the very Firſt Unmade Thing; and, that Humane Nature of it ſelf is ordain'd to know the *Self-Being Thing*, and ſee why even this is not from another, but from it-ſelf; which is to behold Its very Nature.

§. 4. Since, therefore, he that clearly ſees *Self-Being*, cannot but as clearly ſee his Motion *ad extra*, that is, all Created things in force of ſuch a principle, that they are, and cannot not-be, and why they cannot not-be; no doubt but all this belongs to the ſatisfaction of Humane Nature. Which concluded, it follows alſo that to Humane Nature, as 'tis Reaſon, or a Principle of learning one thing out of another, there's nothing farther due, or deſirable: for, what befits it not, is not its Good, or deſirable by it. Nature, then, is quiet when it arrives to this degree, and, which follows, immovable and immutable, and fix'd in that Term for which 'twas produc'd. Wherefore, ſince Chriſtian Life promiſes nothing elſe, but to bring Man to that

Reſt

Rest, which is plac'd in the *Vision of God*, 'tis most evidently concluded that Christian Life is the most Excellent, if you will, of those that are call'd Humane Lives; yet one of them, and not of any forrein graft, but natural to the stock on which it grows.

§. 5. And on the same stock grow two other sorts of Lives, the Vegetative or Sensitive, rendring the Body, by Bigness, Strength, and the service of the Senses, an Instrument to Science and Intellective Knowledg: And the Intellective Life which by Disciplines and Arts, raises man to pursue and take the most commodious, and, in a manner highest Pleasure, if we consider Pleasure restrain'd to the short Span between our Birth and Death. And this Life, if improv'd with the knowledg of Future things, is subservient to the Christian one. This Christian Life, therefore, is the supreme of Humane Lives or Actions. And, because *Virtue* we call *the Utmost of the Power*, or in the power of the Agent; 'tis clear, that Christian Life, simply and *absolutely* in respect of Humane Nature, is Virtuous: in the other two Lives if any illustrious actions ap-

pear, they are call'd and are Virtuous, onely *defectuously* and compar'd to their own kind.

§. 6. And, because the sole Vision of God gives Rest to a Humane Minde; 'tis clear that, for attaining this, whatever besides any ways allures our affections is justly contemn'd: and, consequently, whenever our Action can be apply'd to ascertain and incteale this, or by one way better than another pursue it; to that, and that way 'tis to be apply'd. And, since the Vegetative Life is ordain'd to serve the Intellectual, and the Intellectual the Christian; whichsoever of the other we cultivate, our aim ought still to be at this last. In every Action, therefore, this must be regarded, whether it may conduce to acquire the Vision of God. And because, if nothing in the Action of the Inferiot Life avert the Soul from the Best attainment of the Beatifical Vision; the better the Inferior Life passes, the rightlyer disposed is the Man to his Beatitude: hence there is no Action which may not, of its own Nature, serve for acquiring the Vision of God; all our Actions, therefore, are to be directed to it, and every Action becomes

comes vitious, in as much as it is not exercised for that.

§. 7. Suppose, therefore, a Man who all his life has ever had this in his head, and order'd all his Actions by it, that this Eternal life is to be attain'd by him, as his onely and fully satiative Good: and let Death deliver his Soul into the World of Light, to see in it the plenitude of all knowable things, except God; and, out of all, let him more and more see, that the knowing God is the onely bliss of his Soul: Is it not plain, that the Affection he carried out of the Body with him, to see God, infinitely increases? The whole strength, therefore, of such a Soul streams towards that Beatifying sight; and whatever is found either in the Understanding or Will of such a Man, fits him for this Vision: which is not impossible, since the Desire of it is Natural to man; neither to a Man prepar'd on his side can God be deficient, whose plenitude of Goodness is always ready to pour out Good.

CHAP. II.

Of the Terms proper to Christian Life.

§. 1. WE have already explicated the Thing, or Essential notion of Christian Life, from its Analogy to Nature: we must now give an account of the Name. Which depends on this, that *Adam*, by his own fault being fall'n from the Tranquillity of Paradise, was found unable to exercise that Life, which might produce Beatitude. Wherefore, both he and his Posterity needed an extrinsecal Help. To him and the principal persons of his Posterity God vouchsaf'd Angelical Instruction; and withall promis'd *Christ*, who should provide for the Universality of Mankind, when the fullness of time should come. Meanwhile, for their terrestrial and carnal Souls, God instituted certain corporeal resemblances; by which not onely the future Goods might

might be signify'd, but, at present too, their Minds, by the expectation of them, might be raised to Him. He, therefore, propos'd himself as a Lawgiver, as one to be fear'd and lov'd, and that would reward with temporal Good and Ills the service or negligence of his People: But still stretching their hope to greater Rewards reserv'd for the future. At length Humane Souls being dispos'd to better things, our Lord Christ propos'd the true Law; discovering the high Mysteries of the most Holy Trinity and Incarnation: but chiefly inculcating the Eternity of the Felicity plac'd in the Contemplation of God. Yet, neither did *He* take away the form of Law-giving: whence His Doctrine got the Name of the Christian Law; and the Life led according to his Rule was call'd Christian.

§. 2. From this way of proceeding by *Command*, more Terms were introduc'd into the Discipline of living rightly, than Nature had or would have made. First, God himself, the End of Nature, being propos'd as a Lord and Law-giver, the Love of our desired *Good* pass'd into the Love of a *Person*: and 'twas said, we lov'd

lov'd *God*, by the same Laws as Nature had prescrib'd us the Love of our *last End*. Nor without Reason; since both the Person commanding was our Final Good, and our Final Good was to be the very Person of the Commander. Hence, the Goods following Christian Life were call'd Rewards, and the Evils consequent to deficiency in It, receiv'd the Notion of Punishments: and the Works, by which such Goods are attain'd, were stil'd the *Service* of God, conformable to his Will, and Merits of Reward; and the contrary, displeasing to God, Offences, Demerits: the things little or nothing chang'd, but their Denominations; and consequently the Peoples Notions, exceedingly altered. Whence, of necessity there must great varieties happen among those that practise Christianity: wherefore, this point, of Denominations, is not so lightly to be pass'd over.

§. 3. First, therefore, God underwent the Notion of an Agent, not out of an Eternally-fix'd Determination of his Wisdom and Goodness, which is as essential to Him as his very Science; but, as it were, spontaneously, and beside

the necessity of Reason, proceeding to his Operations upon election and exercising Dominion, as it were, by Power, and not onely by pure Goodness overflowing upon his Creatures. Again, on the Creatures side, Obedience to the Divine Commands seemed due, not onely because they were of themselves the most precious and profitable Operations in the Creatures power, but purely because they were commanded. And, this very thing was both aggreable and necessary to our Nature: For, 'twas impossible for a Humane Mind, by its short steps, to come to see that those things are the Best, which, yet, if it had a power of doing, it would never be capable of Beatitude. Necessary, therefore, 'twas for it to have a coactive Reason of doing proposed it; whereupon, without much discourse, it might fall to practise those Operations, whose usefulness it comprehended not: such as this, that It must be done, because He commands who has Power.

§. 4. Again, because He is the same, who made all things, and in virtue of the same Creation perpetually animates them to action: 'tis plain, that nothing

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in the world either is or is done, which
is not done by Him; though He is no
conceiv'd personally present to the par
ticular. The Goods, therefore, which
follow a pious Life, are done by Him
and the Evils, too, which accompany
Ill life, as far as they are any thing,
also effected by Him; and both
made to follow, as effects do from the
causes. Whence, most congruously
God is said to render all these to
Good or Evil-Doers, in respect of
actions themselves; notwithstanding
that they immediately spring from
cond Causes. Since, therefore, He
inflicts Evil for violating the Law is
to punish, and He that renders Good
the Well-doer is said to reward:
plain that God dispenses both Rewa
and Punishments, though the sole
cond-Causes are found immediately
produce them; God only concurr
by his ordination of Nature, and imp
ling it to act.

§. 5. In like manner, since He, wh
out of an eye to a reward, propos'd by
Intelligent person, in recompence of
action requir'd of him, performs it,
said to deserve the reward: 'tis cl
th

that those Actions, by which, out of the disposition of Second-Causes, Man works out his own Beatitude, because the very Actions are commanded, and Beatitude is promis'd as a Reward to the doers of them, and he does them to acquire It, are truly and properly Merits. Likewise, the Infelicity which follows the Vitious Actions of this life, because foretold by God to be inflicted on Sinners, makes those Vitious Actions Demeritorious, or meriting punishment: with this difference, perhaps, that Infelicity, being it self also a kind of Ill, ev'n as 'tis a punishment, has not God for its direct and proper Cause, but onely as it were materially, as He is the Cause of that Thing or Good to which this Privation and Illness adheres. For, all defect rises from the limitedness of the Creature, and that which is seen in the effect springs from the defect of its Cause: and so all defect of Creatures is to be refunded into the defect of the principle in them. Whence, since God is wholly Being and Goodness, no defect can directly and properly be referred to Him.

§. 6. Less properly are our Actions said

said to please or displease God, to be Offences or appeasers of Him. But this impropriety proceeds from another head: viz. because we are apt to apprehend Correlatives on Gods side for the Relatives on ours. For we are made *sure* that out of the *series* of Causes ordain'd by God, we are destin'd sometimes to rewards, sometimes to punishments; which is lightly expressed by these terms, *Such one, to whom God will do Good or Ill*; and these words speak as much as *Whom God Loves or Hates*. Whence, of our Actions, some are such as render us worthy the Love of God, and a fit subject for his Good-Will; others such as render us worthy his Hatred, and as it were subject us to his Revenge. Now, these terms, *to Love, Hate, be Angry, &c.* are apt to signifie to us Impressions in the Lover or Hater himself, and to be conceiv'd by us as Relations from him to the Object: but neither of these is true of God, as that He should either be chang'd, or have any Relation towards us: but whatever there is of Novelty is all on our side, and, through the weakness of our apprehension, attributed to God. Which, yet,

how

how great a Good it is a cause of to Mankind, they know who have much commerce with Spiritual persons.

CHAP. III.

Of the main Scope or Aim of Christian Life.

§. 1. OUt of what has been said it may be evident enough to the attentive Reader, that there arise two Methods in Christian Life: the Acts of almost all Virtues being divided according to the explicated variety of Apprehensions. And, of the particularity of these Paths, by Gods assistance, we'll speak hereafter: Now, we must fall upon the End of Christian Action, that first we may establish what it ought to aim at. For, the Apostle has excellently instructed us, when he answer'd his Master, *O Lord, we know not whither thou goest, and how can we know the way?* For, though we have said, that the Beatitude of the Future Life is the End, to

which

which Christian Life is ultimately directed; yet that answer suffices not our present intention. For, here we enquire what, in this life, has the Notion of a Mark or Butt, which, he that hits, has done what to have done is meet for Eternal Beatitude. *Vid. Chap.* 11. §. 3. Some, who call themselves not onely Divines but Mysticks, tell us, that the End of Christian Exercises is a certain Union of Mans Soul, as to its Essence, with the Divine Nature. They contemn the Understanding; they affirm they pass beyond the Will; and inhere in the very Divine Essence. If you ask them a proof of so unexpected a Truth; they tell you, they Experiment it; you must believe the Experienced; but the unexperienced can see or understand nothing of this Nature. Whence, they allow Scholastical Theology no judgment concerning this Discipline. I, by their good leave, see three things I'm to do about this Opinion: First, to speak of the Opinion it self: next, to examine the force of Experience: and, lastly, to prove it subject to Scholastical Theology.

§. 2

§. 2. As to the Opinion it self, I certainly assert it opposite to two Principles of Christian Faith. The first is, that no Man is capable of an Hypostatical Union, but our Lord Jesus Christ, Boo, whoever will have the Substance of the Soul immediately united to the Divine Essence, must necessarily hold, that two Natures have clubb'd into one Nature, or one Person: for, if there be an Union made, there remains some one thing out of the two; and, because Unity by the Powers is secluded, so that it is neither one by the Understanding nor by Love, nothing remains but that it be one substantially. Now, whatever is in the Substance belongs to the Person. Of necessity, therefore, one Person must have grown out of two; and that either a Divine, or Humane, or third Person. But there's nothing of all these which is not against Faith; as 'tis also, that two Natures should *subsist* in the same Person, which onely remains. I have not deduc'd these things, with a design to persuade the Reader 'tis those Authors meaning really to say any of them; for, I know well enough, they will detest them all: but, to render it

clear, that they understand not what they say; but use magnificent words, whose force they see not through.

§. 3. The other Doctrine of Christian Faith is, that the Beatitude of the Future Life is plac'd in the Vision of God. For, since whatever in this life is done Christianlike, has the Notion of a Way and Means to attain that Beatitude; doubtless 'tis more imperfect and ignoble than the Beatifical Vision it self. Now, these Divines slight the Understanding, and boast they transcend the Will, and are united to the Divine Essence by the very Nature of the Soul. If, then, any such conjunction is acquirable by our Acts, and this ev'n rejecting and trampling our Operations under foot: what can be said, but that 'tis above the whole kind of our Actions; and either is better than the Beatifical Vision, or in the Future life it self something like it is to be expected, which should be promis'd us and esteem'd by us more than the Vision it self? Neither of which can be reconcil'd with this Doctrine of our Holy Faith, that our Beatitude is plac'd in the *Vision* of the Divine Essence.

§. 4. Next, I have propos'd to speak

of

of the force of the Experiments which they profess: and I confidently affirm, if they assert such points as these can be known by experience, they are wholly deceiv'd. Not onely because 'tis evident the things they say are false; but also, because 'tis a fond conceit that they should be subject to Experiment. For, first, is it fit to believe that God is subject to sense and experiment? Whatever is known by experiment is either known by sense or by Effects. Effects themselves profess none which may not proceed from created causes. For, besides the Union it self which they assert interceeds between theirs and the Divine Essence, what else is there which may not be wrought in the Soul by Angels? Wherefore, from no effect can they convince this Union; and, which follows, 'tis onely knowable by Sensation; and so God is affirm'd to be subject to Sensation. Nor far from absurd is the remaining part of their Proposition, that the Soul it self should be knowable by Sensation: the experience and consent of all Doctors teaching us, that we know our Souls onely from its effects. This, therefore, is

certain, that these Divines by sole experience would confirm a Doctrine, which 'tis clear, cannot be learn'd by experience.

CHAP. IV.

Of the Experiments of the Mysticks.

§. 1. But, Reason is not enough to convince them who use not Reason: Let us, therefore, try the force of Experience. First, they assert the Rational Soul consists of parts. For, some find a Bottom in the Soul, others a Top; all, an Essence distinct from the Powers. And, among Scholastical Divines, indeed, some allow this Distinction of the Powers from the Essence: but, themselves teach that 'tis convinc'd by Reason, not Experience. Other Divines deny it: Neither side contests it by Experiments: Whence, 'tis plain enough that Experience avails little, as to this point. But, as for parts in the very

very Essence of the Soul, since they are opposite to the very Indivisibility of it, true Divinity permits not so much as Reasoning, much less esteems Sense believable concerning them. Besides, the Mysticks themselves agree not in their Experiments: Some asserting it to be the lowest part of the Soul, in which they fancy the Union with God; others, the highest: of which there could be no doubting, if 'twere to be judged by Sensation. Again, we see nothing of our Acts, but what is purely Material, and therefore makes it self be seen by a *reflected* stroak: all the rest is perceiv'd onely by Discourse and the deduction of consequences. Again, the more Antient of the Mysticks stiffly attest, that they experience the Will to move it self, without previous knowledg; the Modern, on experience, affirm that Knowledg precedes their Volitions: whence is evidenc'd how much faith is to be given to their Experiments. And, whoever with attention examines the things related by the very chief of the Mysticks, shall easily observe them so mixt with their own or their Directors Opinions, that 'tis hard to judg what

in reality 'tis that has been repreſented ev'n to their Fancy.

§. 2. More inſtances might be alledg'd wherein theſe boaſters of Experiments diſagree; were not theſe enough. I proceed, therefore, to their Third aſſertion: whereby they deny that what they ſay, is judgable by Scholaſtical Theology; as being their Inferior, and ignorant of the paths they walk in. But, it muſt be plainly told them, that this *Theſis* is the Daughter of Pride, and Mother of Rebellion againſt the Church. For, if they refuſe to be judg'd by Doctors, Prelates, and Councils; do they not clearly profeſs, that they obey not the Church? And Theſe, by what Rule but that of Scholaſtical Theology, do they in ſuch caſes frame their Decrees? Again, what Principle is there of Truth in the Catholick Church, which the Scholaſticks make not uſe of? They turn over the Scriptures, they conſult the Fathers, they ſearch into Nature, they adhere to Tradition: what farther Principle is there, ſtedfaſt and certain, and worthy to be for a Rule? Laſtly, wherein differs the caſe of theſe Myſticks from that of Hereticks? Do not both

appeal

appeal to the private inspiration of the H. Spirit? Do not both of them disagree among themselves: and therefore cannot agree, because they have not any common principle wherein to agree; *viz.* neither Reason nor Authority? But to speak the Truth, Mystical Theology it self is a part of Scholastical Theology: and they who assert these things are utterly ignorant what Mystical Theology is.

CHAP. V.

What Mystical Theology is.

§. 1. TO explain the *Thing*, or *what* Mystical Theology is in it self, this first is to be observ'd, That the Name of Mystical Theology is, as most others, transfer'd by the Moderns to an incongruous signification. For, whereas 'tis clear, by the name and term, *Theology*, that a certain Science is expreſt; by modern use it signifies a way of li-

ving; whence a certain kind of pious Life is call'd Mystical Theology. And this is the origin of diverse errors in this Question: *viz.* That they who endeavor to expound it, wholly busie themselves not so much in drawing out, as erecting and sublimating Acts of the Will: Then, in always harping on certain Divine influences, and explaining manners of acting and suffering, which they either experience or think they do: all which, as far as they are true, belong not to Theology, but to a way of pious life. To which yet, some Professors of Scholastical Theology stick so close, that they will exclude all *Intellection*, and stiffly maintain it must be renounc'd whereas *it alone* belongs to Theology.

§. 2. Next, we must know, that 'tis S. *Thomas*'s Doctrine, *No Word is spoken univocally of God and a Creature*: in which proposition lies the whole Nature of Mystical Theology. But, this proposition some Interpreters so deform, that, of the clearest that can be, they render it the most obscure; and, of the most profitable, the vainest. For, what can be clearer, than that Analogy is a kind of Equivocation: and that a word Ana-

Analogically ſpoken has more ſignifications or Definitions: and herein onely differs from a pure Equivocation, that by deſign, that is, out of the intention of the Speakers, the word is transfer'd from one ſignification to another: Whence it comes to paſs that in the ſignifications to which a word is transfer'd, there always remains ſome reſpect to the primary ſignification, from which the deduction is made, as the Writers of *Logick* uſe to ſhew in the example of the word *Sound* or Health. But our weaker Divines, affraid of the Bug-bear of the terms, dare not confeſs that a word ſpoken of God and a Creature, (for example, to be *good* or *juſt*) is not ſaid of both in the ſame ſignification: and therefore, with Interpretations void of all reaſon, they not ſo much violate, as utterly deſtroy the propoſition of S. *Thomas*.

§. 3. Nor is it onely the Doctrine of S. *Thomas*, but of the H. Church, *That God is incomprehenſible by the Saints that ſee him in the Future State, and Unknowable, as He is in Himſelf, by the Saints that think of Him in this life*: which S. *Thomas* learn't from S. *Dionyſius* the *Areopagite*,

pagite, and has deliver'd down in the cited proposition. And in that consists the whole Notion of Mystical Theology, which is the Third and highest part of Theology; to be added to the other Two already explicated *Ch.* 1. *&* 2. For it consists wholly in the Negation of all our knowledg concerning God: that, after by force of Philosophy, we have enlightned our Understanding, explicating the sayings of H. Scripture and the Fathers speaking according to it, conformably to those things which Philosophy teaches are agreable to the Divine Nature; exempting Him from Anger, Grief, Love, and such like Passions; and teaching that He is Spiritual, Infinite, Immovable, Immutable; what signifies being Three in One, Lord, Judg, Governor, *&c.* by this new Science we unlearn that which we seem'd to know and have collected; and deny these very same things of God, which we believ'd and rejoyc'd we had with great labor found out. And in this lies *Mystical Theology*.

§. 4. Because this Doctrine is the highest step of Theology, 'twill not be improper to illustrate it by an example. Let

Let a Divine think what he has ſaid when he has pronounc'd God to be *merciful* and *juſt*: and he will ſee that he has had two forms in his Underſtanding, one of Mercy and another of Juſtice, whereof one is not the other; and if one were the other, neither would be what it is, but ſome Third, which would be neither Mercy nor Juſtice. Then, let him reflect whether, in God, the very form of Mercy be not the very form of Juſtice; and he will ſee it is: becauſe, otherwiſe, God would indeed be Merciful and Juſt; but, it could not be ſaid that his very Mercy were his Juſtice. Becauſe, therefore, it muſt be confeſt, that the very Mercy of God is his Juſtice; 'tis convinc'd, that the form it ſelf, from which God is denominated Merciful, is the very ſame from which he is denominated Juſt: and, which follows, that 'tis neither Mercy nor Juſtice, becauſe of either of theſe the other is deny'd; but, of that, from which God is ſaid to be Juſt and Merciful, it cannot be deny'd either that 'tis Mercy or Juſtice. What, therefore, ſhall we do? we find that God, both according to his works of Mercy, and thoſe of Juſtice, is *Good*:

we muſt ſay, therefore, that God is Merciful and Juſt, becauſe of the form of Goodneſs; which, being One in it ſelf, contains theſe two Notions, as parts into which 'tis reſolvable by our knowledg.

§. 5. Again, let's examine Goodneſs; and ſee, that it ſo reſpects the Science of Divine and Humane things, that is, Wiſdom, as that neither every Wiſe perſon is Good, nor every Good perſon Wiſe: and it will preſently be clear, that the Notion of Wiſdom is one, that of Goodneſs another: and, applying this to God, by our former diſcourſe, we ſhall conclude, that neither Wiſdom nor Goodneſs is in God. What, therefore, muſt be done? we find that both Wiſdom and Goodneſs are *Things* or *Beings*: We'll conclude, then, that God is *Wiſe* and *Good*, in that He is a *Thing* or *Being*; becauſe both Wiſdom and Goodneſs, are in a manner, parts of his Being, into which by our Reaſon it may be reſolv'd. But, again, we find that the Notions of Thing and Being are indifferent to this, that it may be ſaid of them that they *are* or *are-not*: but, in God there is nothing which is not actu-

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ally. What, then, will God at least be a Thing, because He is *Existence* or *Being*? no; because in our Notion Existence is somewhat of the Thing, and not the Exister: which to affirm of God, were incongruous. But, any other more common Name we have none. Plainly, therefore, 'tis deduc'd that there is no term we use, which is not to be *deny'd* of God: and herein consists Mystical Theology, that 'tis a Science by which we are taught that we truly know or understand nothing of God, or of the Divine Nature, as it is in it self.

CHAP. VI.

How the words of the Mysticks are to be understood.

§. 1. HEre, let any Divine deny to me that these things I have said are clear and accommodated to the understanding of the Learned: or, if he cannot, let him acknowledg the Expressions of the Mysticks, which seem'd to contain

certain contradiction in them, may be fairly reconcil'd. For, who can deny but this Science is superior to that Theology, which the Doctors commonly profess in the Schools? or, on the other side, not acknowledg it wholly consistent in this, to make us know that we understand nothing of God's not so much as That He is: Since we do not understand what *to be* signifies, when 'tis pronounc'd of God. Is it not, therefore, evident that this Science is a most learned Ignorance? or, supposing it such, are not all the rest of the Expressions, which the Mysticks use about the *Understanding*, clear and perspicuous? for example, that Definition of Mystical Contemplation, or of the supreme degree of Contemplation, that 'tis a Manifestation of God in obscurity, and a certain wonderful sight of God in Darkness it self: and this, that 'tis an Ardent (that is, clear and penetrative) Vision of the Divine Obscurity, to wit, of his unknowableness. Again, that 'tis an Adhesion of the Mind to God: or a suspension of the Mind, out of an infinite and eternal Light, most delightful, most perfect and transformative; or, out of a

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knowledg which ſwallows up the Soul. Again, that 'tis a Fooliſh Wiſdom and void of reaſon, exceeding all praiſe. The ſame 'tis for thoſe Terms, Abyſs of the Divine Charity, Darkneſs of Light, (or through too much Light,) Dark Contemplation, Obſcure Inhabitation, Obſcurity's Shadow wherein God hides himſelf; that the Underſtanding is ignorant of God, that God is ineffably perceiv'd: but, above all the reſt, that the Soul renounces all Fantaſms or ſimilitudes of Creatures, which is the *baſis* of all the other Expreſſions, and, in the explication we have made, a moſt evident Truth.

§. 2. What hitherto we have ſaid, aims onely at this, to ſhew that thoſe things the Myſticks ſpeak high of their Theology are not fictitious. For they are, at leaſt as to the words, taken out of the Great *Dionyſius*: but, whether the borrowers have underſtood them in the ſenſe by me explicated, I neither know nor enquire. But, that this is the meaning of the *Areopagite*, I am perfectly ſatisfy'd. Hitherto I have ſpoken of the *Underſtanding*: now I add, that the meaning and truth of that Axi-

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ome about the *will*, in which the Mysticks seem to strive against Nature, is clear. For, from the Knowledg we have explicated, 'tis manifestly consequent, that the Will not onely follows, or is carried to a thing unknown, but for that very reason, because 'tis unknown. For, after this Science has taught that God is, therefore, unknown, because he exceeds and has no similitude with any thing we know or can know; 'tis plain, that the Good of Man plac'd in the Knowledg of God is, in like manner, unknown and more excellent and quite of another kind, than all knowledg possible to us, besides the Beatifical Vision. Wherefore, Man's the more enflam'd to know Him, the surer he is that he knows nothing of Him. Nor is this any other, than what *Aristotle* teaches in his *Posteriorums*, that we are carry'd to a thing *Unknown as to its particularity*, because we have receiv'd before a *confus'd* knowledg of the same thing: unless, perhaps, because the Excellence of God is the cause of His being Unknown, the very ignorance it self somewhat more formally provokes Love.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Of the Affections following the different Theologies.

§. 1. IT follows, out of what has been said, that the Affections which directly flow from this Theology, or Mystical Contemplation, are Admiration and Desire of seeing that which is hidden from us. For, the other Affections are either common, or if they have any particular degree, it lies cover'd under some head not yet explicated by us; nor is it in this place to be mention'd. Now 'tis said above, that the first of the two Theologies we have formerly treated of, *Chap.* 1. & 2. (and which may be call'd *Metaphysical* or *Scholastical*) looks also on God as a Thing, and on his Sight as the End of Nature. So far, therefore, these two Theologies agree: But, because they are manifestly divers, the Affections, too, following out of their contempla-

tion must necessarily be different. First, therefore, 'tis plain, the Admiration, in this Mystical way, is of another Nature than in the former. For, there we admire a thing known as it were how great it is; and are ravish'd with its beauty: But in this we admire the thing, because 'tis so great that we are far from comprehending what a kind of thing it is. Whence it comes to pass, that the expectation of seeing the thing is far greater in him that contemplates Mystically, than in the Metaphysical Divine. Out of which it follows, that the desire to of seeing is far greater. Another difference also is, that the Metaphysical Divine fixes his desire chiefly upon the Vision; as thinking that those things which he has demonstrated of God are formally in God, because they are simply-simple perfections: but the Mystical Divine admires the Thing which is God: and, in a manner neglecting that it is his own Good which is attain'd by the Vision, is wholly suspended in the *What God is*, and so rises to a higher Esteem of the Object he contemplates, by thinking *then*, on nothing but It; which Esteem breeds in him a more pure and perfect charity.

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§. 2. The third (or *Metaphorical*) Theology which we have explicated, if it may be call'd Theology and not, properly, Faith (which yet the Fathers fear not to call Theology) represents God to us as a Person supremely excellent, supremely wise, supremely good, supremely powerful, in a word supremely amiable: and on this account provokes our Affections to love Him. For his Benefits, Rewards and Punishments, by which he drives us to observe his Commands, are as it were Effects and Parts of that Goodness and Amiableness, and integrate it. And here this offers it self to our enquiry, which Acts of Charity are to be prefer'd? whether those that embrace God as our Ultimate End, or those that pursue him as the Sweetest of Persons? And, first, if we regard either Nature or Doctors, both agree that God is to be lov'd as our last End. Our last End is our Bliss, and that thing which we chiefly want: but he that loves God as a Friend, neither loves him as his own Beatitude, nor as a thing he wants; but is rather taught to pursue him for his lovelyness, without any other hope. And a Christians being com-

manded to love God as his last End is taken Equivocally by this kind of Directors, to signifie that the manner of prosecution due to our last End is to be apply'd to God as our Friend, and not that Himself is to be accounted our last End.

§. 3. Hence it follows that the love of God as an amiable Person, is not the love of Him as of our last End; and, consequently, that 'tis deduc'd from that, and posterior to it, and not containing it, nor so strong and valid. Besides, if its origin be look'd into, it will appear to take its birth from that love, which we call, of *Friendship*; which consists chiefly in a will of doing good to our Friend: whence, both the lover is taught to give all he has of his own to God, and to be ready to do or suffer any thing whatever to please God; as if he contributed some good of delight or pleasure to God, or did him a notable service. Which seems not to stand with that notion of our own Unprofitableness, which Christ has prescrib'd, and is the *basis* of true Humility. For, to what purpose am I commanded to give to God, if I truly acknowledg that I have nothing to give? I add, that this

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Notion seems drawn from inordinate love, and that of Passion, not of Reason; such as is the love of a Bridegroom to his Bride, as it uses to be represented in Comedies, and that of *Pylades* and *Orestes*; which, if weigh'd in the scale of Reason, will be found excessive, and proceeding from the hurry of Passion, not the order of Reason; nor to be truly the Virtue of Friendship, but certain Animal motions, violating and drawing, or rather seducing Reason after them. But the Virtue of Friendship, between wise persons, is a certain tie between equals, to help and be beneficial to one another, rising from the Virtue which is in both. Whence, it can have no place between Man and God; since Man can neither be beneficial to God, nor has any Virtue in himself whereby he may *please* God, nor good whence to benefit Him.

4. Hence it plainly appears, how far those Exhortations of some are to be rejected, That we should cast off the care or love of Beatitude, as if it were a Virtue to renounce that into the hands of God. Now, 'tis as if we should say to God, *We so love thee, that we will do none of those things thou commandest.* For

since the Law of Nature is the Law of God; and the first precept of the Law of Nature is to love our Beatitude; to neglect or renounce Beatitude is to renounce the Law of Nature and the precepts of God. The same 'tis, To be willing to be in the torments of Hell that they may please God. For, besides that the torments of Hell are themselves sins, and that 'tis a most unbecoming proposition to God, to offer Him torments, as for their own sakes pleasing, when they are not otherwise profitable; to renounce eternal Rest is to renounce Beatitude, which we have shew'd is to renounce the precepts of God, nay God Himself. In a word, Christian perfection consists in our renouncing those apparent Goods, which are truly ills, and impediments of true Goods; not in our renouncing of *true goods*; and in our renouncing those Actions which fall in the way of Humane life; not of those which cannot come into practise, and which truly we neither understand nor know what we say when we profess to renounce them.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the three ways of Spiritual Life.

§. 1. YEt, though we have said the love of God, as a Person supremely amiable, is not the best Act of Charity; we will not therefore say, 'tis not the profitablest: but that question remains still for us intire and untouch't. For, though the best Acts are most profitable for the best persons; yet that Act will be said simply profitablest, which in respect of whole Mankind, is the profitablest. And the best persons are but few. Now let's consider how that's to be understood, which is in every body's mouth almost, that there are three degrees of Christian life; the Purgative, Illuminative, and Unitive way: which also distinguish our Science it self, and the Affections following it. And as to Science, the Purgative way lies in this, that we understand what

words are spoken Metaphorically of God, from our being us'd to bodies and Humane conversation. The Illuminative way is exercis'd, whilst by our consideration or speculation we acquire and practise that Science, which comprehends and makes use of those Notions which Divines call simply-simple, and some will have to be formally in God. The Unitive way consists herein, that we contemplate that these Attributes are *not* in God such as they are in our Understanding; but one only most simple Formality, altogether unknown to us, and unknowable in this world.

§. 2. And, as to Affections, one is said to proceed by the Purgative way, as long as he converts the motions of the sensitive Appetite, or of the Concupiscible or Iracible faculty, from Temporal things to Divine: as when we endeavor to exercise towards God that love which a Son bears to his Father, or a Bride to her Bridegroom; or grieve for our sins, or our reins tremble when we see Gods Glory taken away, as old *Mattathias* did. They prosecute the Illuminative way, who, secretly and strongly in their own Consciences, determine

termine to conform their Actions to those Notions of God and Divine things, which Metaphysick and Scholastick Theology deliver; without any motion or fervors being perceiv'd in their body and inferior appetite; or their disposition of mind shewing it self otherwise than by Actions. Lastly, they go by the Unitive way, who are employ'd in the sole love of God and Beatitude, omitting all other affections. But, we are not to think that these three ways are so distinct, that they are as it were divers states; and that he who exercises himself in the first has not yet climb'd up to the middle, or he who prosecutes the middle one reaches not the highest: but that they mix with one another; and, he who exercises himself in the highest, has, not therefore, thrown off the rest, unless perhaps he have attain'd to the highest perfection. For, it happens but to very few, to quit the inferior ways, after they have well exercis'd themselves in the superior: and to the most 'tis not profitable.

§. 3. To frame some conceit of this, we must set before our eys the progress

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of Man: whom we shall find to advance almost by these degrees. When first he grows sensible in his Mothers womb, that is, as soon as he is Man, he perceives goods and ills materially, or that the good and ill things *are*; but judges not yet that they are *goods* and *ills*. After a little more time, as it were awaking from sleep, he knows or judges that some things are *good*, others *ill* for himself. When he has overcome this also, he arrives to understand, that, *because* one thing is, its opposite is not: and then properly he begins to be Intellective; for to *understand* is this, to know the very notion of Being, or as it were reflexively to see that a Thing is not No-thing. Thenceforward, by little and little, from this principle, he gathers to himself a Treasure of connected Notions or Truths; till he have improv'd to this, to be able to judge of himself as it were fully, or discern what is finally Good for him; and what thing or things conduce to effect that: Then he is indeed a Man, and properly capable of Mortal sin. Yet I do not affirm Man, till that age, free from damnation even after Baptism: because, though

he not capable, before that age, of determining concerning himself, yet, how far those judgments he has collected may grow to evacuate the force of Baptism, I know not. But, in secula, for the most part, so long credulous to his Parents, and accustom'd to follow their judgment; and therefore that Baptism may yet avail him to salvation.

CHAP. IX.

Of comparing the Way by Judgments, to the way by Affliction.

§. 1. It is plain out of what has been said, that there are two ranks of Judgments in Man: One, which, in a manner, springs from sole Nature, through the impulse which Objects make on the sense and the Brain. Another, which Nature also makes, but to the framing whereof she makes use of Man himself, as Man, or as he is Discoursive:

cousive: which consists of those Judgments that follow the comparison of more Objects with one another; as when a Man out of his memory of things past, and what he knows of things to come, disposes his present operation. And, because he often disposes it otherwise than sense, which onely considers present things, dictates; it comes to pass that the judgments springing from sense and from Reason, are disagreeing and opposite. And, although those which are concluded out of Reason seem to be built upon those which are perceiv'd by senses; yet we experience them often to be more and deeper fix'd in the Soul, than those immediately imprinted by the senses. And, that those indeed, which are imprinted by sense, are varied according to the disposition of the Body; and the same things sometimes please, sometimes displease. But, those which are fix'd in Reason, if they be rightly concluded, never displease, though their opposites may motion through Passion please; unless the principles, in which they are founded, chance to be forgotten. Again, is evident the Judgments founded in Reason grow clearer and firmer and readier for the

the oftener they are repeated: whence it cannot be doubted, but they are imprinted in the Soul by the ſtroaks of Phantaſms, in the ſame manner as Judgments begotten by Senſe: though they have a root in virtue of the Soul, which Judgments begotten by Senſe have not; and in that regard excell them.

§. 2. At length the difficulty is to be propoſ'd, for whoſe ſake theſe Animadverſions have been premiſ'd. Suppoſe, therefore two pious Souls exerciſing themſelves about ſome Myſtery of our Faith, (*v. g.* our Lords Paſſion, or the Euchariſt) the ſame while, with the ſame diligence, and determin'd to do as much for the future: but, let ones buſineſs be, to ſee more and more the truth of the motives; and in virtue of their clearneſs and intellectual certainty, to order ſtrongly what is to be done: let the other's pains be employ'd, content with the knowledg it has, to excite in the Will the greateſt motions and adhe-ſions he can; from which let the ſame (as to their *ſpecies*) reſolutions flow of ordering the life to God, which the Contemplator made: then let Death ſeiz them both: The queſtion is, whether

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of these two dies better prepar'd for Beatitude, in force of the explicated exercises? And, in general, this is ask'd, whether a Man panting after Beatitude should chuse his way by Meditation or Intellectual Contemplation, or rather by moving his Affections? Nor is there any doubt but, according to the diversity of Dispositions, one manner of life is fitter for one, th'other for another: but 'tis enquir'd, which of these manners, in a subject capable of either, is more to be esteem'd?

§. 3. And truly, out of what has been said, it may be easily evidenc'd, that that Life, which goes by intellectual determinations, becomes the prudenter sort of persons, and those who are fitter to govern humane affairs: because we experience that great men and esteem'd for prudence are leaders of such lives. Again, it appears that 'tis more connatural to a Spirit to have the Will govern'd by the Understanding, than the Understanding rectify'd by the Will. Lastly, we see that it belongs to the Understanding, making use of Discourse, to moderate those judgments which immediately rise from the sense and body

and therefore, that, out of the Nature of the thing, its decrees are ſtronger than theſe. Notwithſtanding, becauſe we ſee the efforts of the Will are very ſtrong and wonderfully affect the Soul; and the very force of Nature (which by its own ſtrength, in a manner, perfects the radical ſubſtance of the Soul and all its ſpiritual motions) lies all to theſe motions: 'tis not eaſily to be yielded, that the force of the affective motives does not recompenſe, as it were by their bulk and quantity, that Nobility which, in intellectual reſolutions, ſeems to raiſe that way above the Affective.

§. 4. Yet, 'tis not to be doubted, but that method, which proceeds of intellectual judgments, is perfecter than that proceeding by affections. And certainly, were it not an operation of God, by which He leads men to Beatitude, attainable only by acts of the Will, 'twere inordinate; that one method ſhould be conſtituted as beſt for Humane matters, and another fitter for Divine: whereas yet we read both of Wiſdom, that *with it are proud Riches and Power*; and that He that advanc'd before God, advanc'd alſo before Men. But, conſidering more

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ſtrictly the ſubject it ſelf of the queſtion, we find that, ſince the Soul is in the middle between Intelligences and Brutes, the method of Affections perfects the Soul, as 'tis better'd by the body and better matter: but, the method of Judgments, as it participates of the Intelligences. The method of Affections makes it, in a manner, a Creature determin'd to God; the method of Judgments makes it, in ſome ſort, indetermin'd, and ſo *more* capable of God, or to receive God: As, the method of Affections as it were limits God to it; the method of Judgments expands the Soul to God. So that the method of Affections is prejudicial to the Soul, in as much as it determines her to, and makes her expect the very thing ſhe affects, and as it were, not content without it: whereas Judgments, by taking off all conceit and conſequently all love of any created fancy, render her more fitly diſpoſ'd to receive God into her. As we ſee things better when with a calm indifferent attention we ſuffer objects to work on us, than when we diſturb their order, and would by violence force them to appear. More ſpiritual, there-

therefore, and more proper perfection, 'tis, which is acquir'd by the way of Judgments, than by the way of Motions.

CHAP. X.

Of the Quantity of Charity in this Life.

HAving explicated the *species*, or formal Object of Charity, and the Method of acquiring it; it remains that we declare the intenſneſs or quantity of it on the Subjects ſide. And, I ſpeak of the ſupreme degree attainable in this life. Now 'tis plain, that this is the condition of our nature in this life, that, if the Soul be intent to more things, not ſubordinate, but alike primary; it leſs loves each than if it proſecuted one alone: and, if it love onely one, 'tis carry'd to that with its whole ſtrength. For 'tis reſtleſs, and muſt of neceſſity be entirely employ'd. Since, therefore, there are in Charity three things; the love of God, the love of others for God, and

the Love's being onely of God: 'tis plain, that the love of others for God is accidental; as being unnecessary, save when a Neighbor occurrs whom we are to benefit. It remains, therefore, that the love be of God, and onely of God: and, 'tis evident, if God alone be lov'd, he is lov'd with the whole heart, the whole soul, the whole strength, and so according to the law and measure due to Charity. Not that there cannot be a greater Charity in another person; or ev'n in this person, when he shall be stronger and better disposed: but that according to his present circumstances, he loves God as he ought, whether he loves him much or little, since he loves him entirely.

§. 2. But this suffices not for our purpose: we are to enquire how far a Man may advance in this life. Nor do I ask this, in how great a multiplication of parts, and, as it were, quantitively, Charity may subsist; which Divines generally agree may encrease without end: but we are in quest of certain specifica-tive degrees, which may constitute di-vers states of the Soul, within which di-vers persons may retain their differences.

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We must know, therefore, that some Divines, who are call'd Mysticks, assign a certain degree of perfection, doubtless as the highest (for a greater cannot be imagin'd) wherein the Soul becomes God. We must use their own words, least we may seem to impose on them. They call it, therefore, an Essential Union, Spiritual Transubstantiation, Deification of the Soul, Possession of the Essential Will of God for their Fundamental Selfness; that the Soul has a better Selfness or Fundamental Being than its own, by the Divine Being participated; that the Soul has so great a plenitude of Being in God, that there is nothing, under God, which it cannot effect, by its powers elevated to a Deiform Being; that there is a total transfusion of the Creature into God; and, lastly, that Souls lose themselves in the Abyss of the Divinity, and become the very Increated and Ideal Being, in which they existed from all Eternity.

§. 3. Two things, I see, I am to do in this Question: First, to explicate what intelligible sense I can give these words; for they are, as the Reader plainly sees, as difficult to be explicated, as

they found a certain wonderful ostentation. The other is, to enquire whether really perfection be plac'd in what they would express. As to the first, 'tis to be observ'd, that if we consider the speculation or purely intuitive intellection, especially of more things together; as when an Architect at one view beholds the agreement of all the parts of his Fabrick, we find the distinct notions of the severals are so in his Understanding that at the same time they are in the *Idea* of the whole, without either hurting their severalties by their inexistence in the whole, or hurting the unity of the whole by the severalties inexistence there; because both the Universe is a Fabrick rais'd out of the Divine Science, and the Science of God is his very Essence; 'tis evidently concluded that all the severalties of the Creatures fo rootedly are in the Essence of God, that neither their Multiplicity prejudices the Divine Simplicity, nor that Simplicity the distinction of the Creatures in it. On the other side, we see in the creatures themselves, their plurality consists not together with Unity, much less with Simplicity. They have, therefore, *in themselves*, a certain

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essential limitation, that excludes others; which they have not in God.

5. These things thus explicated, will be no difficult matter to understand the sayings of the Mystick. For, when they saw this limitation was the root of all Pride, or self-esteem in above merit, and Pride was the cause of all vices; they judg'd this was to be rooted out: and they call'd it *Egoity* or Selfness, by a new coin'd word, but fit enough to express their meaning. Our Modern Philosophers would call it the Numerical Difference or formal Principle of Individuation. This, they say, must be taken away, and the Divine Individuation substituted in its place, not unlike what is read of *S. Gertrude* and *S. Catherine of Siena*, that Christ chang'd hearts with them; or, if not the very Divine Individuation, at least that Notion of *Self* which is found in the Divine *Idea*: which, because it has not in exclusion of other Differences, has not any Origin of Pride or Vitious affection towards it self, but behaves it self towards it self precisely according to this respect, what, all things or the whole Universe consider'd, is best for it self: which is

the very consideration that God follows in conferring Goods on us. And so is understood what is to be Transubstantiated spiritually, or wholly transfunded, or passe into that *Idea* of themselves which is in God, and have another fundamental *Entity*, *viz.* to have the Object of their first and most rooted Love Now, and this very thing *that themselves are in God*, instead of the created and limited Individuation given them by Nature.

CHAP. XI.

Whether a Mystick ought to renounce his own Individuation.

1. WE must next enquire, whether this saying be true, or whether he that follows perfection ought to aspiri to strip himself of all affection to his own Individuation? And two things raise a difficulty: One, whether it be a thing possible, or onely a certain

tain glitter of Fancy, and illusion in those that believe they have attain'd this perfection. The other is, whether it be ordinate, and that which God requires of us, and truly the top of charity and perfection. And first, 'tis plain, that this affection is inordinate, because the order of Charity is, that we should love our Neighbour as our selves; that is, that from those things we covet for our selves, we should learn what to covet for our Neighbour, and will those to him. If therefore, we by renouncing our own Individuation, make no difference between our selves and our Neighbours; certainly we observe not this: Again, neither do we love God as our Ultimate end: for certainly the love of our last end requires, that we should not by any means brook to go without it; but the order of Charity requires, that we be content our Neighbour be depriv'd of the ultimate end, when God permits it. Again, to be affected indifferently to all things, is for him whose office 'tis to govern all things. Wherefore, if God approves this affection in us, he will also approve a desire of governing all

things, and give us an understanding fit to do it. I fear, therefore, there may be some lurking affection of Pride, which makes them forget themselves are but Creatures, and unknowingly affect to themselves what is proper to God.

§. 2. But, 'tis not less clear, such an affection as impossible; and that they who think they have such affections are deceiv'd, because they understand not Nature. For, first, every Creature has its degree of Exiting limited by the Subject's nature in which 'tis receiv'd. Wherefore, neither the Notion of Existence, nor the Action following the Manner of Existing can exceed the Subject in which it is; especially the prime or chief Love, which immediately follows. Again, 'tis clear, that all knowledg is founded in the knowledg of ones-self; and love follows knowledg; Love, therefore, must of necessity be first and chiefly to ones-self. Moreover, we have taught above (Ch. 7. §. 1,) that the love of God, as a Person, supposes the love of God as Beatifying us, or our Good: but the love of God as Beatifying us, includes

includes the love of our selves, or rather is the highest love of our selves. Impossible, therefore, 'tis that any love should abstract from our own person. Lastly, if nothing can be lov'd but because 'tis *Good*; and Good signifies Proportionate; and Proportionate is proportionate to some body; that must needs not be Good, nor lov'd under the Notion of Good, which is not proportionate to the Lover. But, in the Divine *Idea* there is nothing proportionate, since there is no limitation; and 'tis only in respect to the Universe that this is apply'd to this, that to that. 'Tis not possible, therefore, to love any thing upon account of existence in the Divine *Idea*.

§. 3. Out of what has been said (*Ch.* 7. §. 1.) it may be understood, that the highest degree of Charity or perfection, attainable in this life, consists in a constant and full desire of enjoying God materially; that is, of God *who is to be enjoy'd*, neither including nor excluding that *he is to be enjoy'd*; but as being supremely amiable, for those things which beget the desire of seeing Him. And, it presently appears,

peare, that this is proper to those who pursue Mystical Theology. Yet I do not hence infer, that some one may become more blessed, who pursues it not; for, 'tis not yet evident, that anything hinders but the degree of intenseness, as they call it, gain'd in an inferiour discipline, may both make amends for and surpass the degree of quality, wherein this manner of loving God excels the others. For since the Philosopher reaches that Friendship is an affection of living together with ones Friend; what forbids but a vast desire of seeing God may grow ev'n in them who love God as a Friend? Scholastical Theology, too, which teaches to prosecute God as the Good and End formally, works a certain incomparable and unspeakable affection in the Contemplator. So that though it appears which Love is, by its quality, the Nobler; yet 'tis undiscover'd which *de facto* operates a greater effect in the Subject.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

Of the distinction of the Degrees of those that endeavour after Perfection.

1. And considering the Subject, first, I see no person is to be discourag'd from acquiring the highest degree of Sanctity; nor can, without his own sin, quit the hope and endeavour to obtain it: not a Layick, not an ignorant, not an Idiot or dull soul, or, who is so void of common sense, as to love no body; and commonly those that are next to fools are most credulous in things they cannot comprehend. If therefore Discipline be not wanting, they are capable of the purest Love of God. 'Tis related of one, that he was simple to such a degree, as, being commanded to hold a lighted Candle in his hand, he suffer'd his hand to be burnt, not to disobey

bey the command. What would no
Souls thus simple do, were they taug
the true way of improving in the lo
of God? In like manner there's no O
peration which can be exempt from b
ing a Subject of most perfect Charit
Whether it be a hateful imployme
as that of an Executioner, or be ex
cis'd by the most despicable sort
people; or those who, upon any a
count which speaks not sin intrinseca
ly, are exclude from Honorable Fu
dions in the Commonwealth. Fo
notwithstanding whatever occasions
sinning there may be in such like ac
ons, 'tis not to be despair'd but G
has, ev'n amongst them, some E
ones, which the World knows no
'Tis the Clergies duty, therefore,
far as in them lies, to leave no condi
on of men void of Discipline.

§. 2. Notwithstanding, the Perso
who endeavour after Beatitude are t
be distinguisht by their operations
For, there are some operations whic
of themselves and directly tend to ep
creasing Charity: others only by the
application. Of this later sort a
those we use to call Indifferent, as Hu
bandry

bandry, Merchandise, Handicrafts, Labours. Of the first are those, which either encrease our Science concerning God, or mitigate our Passions and Concupiscences; whereof these are proper to the Religious, those to the Clergy: Yet, the later belong to the Clergy by accident, as being common to men; and of the former the Religious too are to participate. There are, therefore, three degrees of those who are earnestly to pursue the perfection of Charity and Beatitude. The first is of the Clergy; whose part it is to be furnisht with those Arts, by which they may breed and encrease Charity in the rest, and conserve and encrease it in themselves; especially by operating on others, or as Masters. Next, of the Religious, whether they be Monks, or Hermits, or Anchorites: For, 'tis proper to all these to provide for their own Salvation, by suppressing their passions and concupiscences, and to have learn't by experience and rules, by what Exercises, either Corporal or Mental, each of them may be advanc'd in Charity more securely and efficaciously, in the way, which abstracts

stracts from the possession of Tempo-
rals. Lastly, 'tis the Layties duty
in common things, to hearken to the
Clergy; (which also is necessary for
the Religious) and in particular cases
to learn by experience what is expedi-
ent for their single selves. I mean here
by Religious, those who profess an
absolute retirednes; as for those
whose profession is to co-operate to
the Spiritual good of their Neighbour,
so far they participate of the Nature
of Clergy-men.

§. 3. 'Tis plain, out of what has
been said, that the two Ranks, of the
Clergy and Layty, herein agree, that
are distinguisht from the Religious,
that they live among Temptations.
Whence, it must needs be, that, in
their actions they retain an Innocency
equal to the Religious, they lead a
life far Nobler than they. Since, as
this is harder, so it makes a stronger
Charity, and a far stronger contempt
of the goods of the body. For, evi-
dent it is, that corporeal things, and
temporal objects, when assisted by the
Senses and Custome, make a greater
impression; and therefore require a
greater

greater strength to overcome them: and which follows, they that, according to the precept of the Apostle, *so use this world as if they us'd it not*, are perfecter then those that use it not at all. Therefore the perfect, either Clergy or Layty, considering only their state in common, are perfecter then the Religious; though the way of the Religious be in it self more apt and easie to breed perfection, and more safe, then that of the Layty. But, because few among the Laity get this grace, so to use the World; and the generality of the Marry'd have their thoughts taken up with the things of the World, *how they may please their Husbands and Wives*: therefore, simply, or as the World goes, the state of the Religious is perfecter then that of the Laity. But, it holds not so, for the Clergy: For, since the action of the Clergy is wholly plac'd in teaching the Laity to use the World as if they us'd it not; it can scarce be that a Clergy-man, who rightly performs the business of a Clergy-man, should not himself use the World as if he us'd it not; and, which follows, the Clergy out of

their

their own state, become perfect for the Religious.

§. 4. Nor hinders it, that 'tis hard for those who use the World, not to fall grievously sometimes. What need I mention *Adam*, or *Noe*, *Moses* and *Aaron*, and *Miriam*? We read that *David*, and many other of the Prophets, grievously slipt. We have, too, Vices of the first Christians commemorated; from which, we find by antient History, the Religious were commonly free, especially if we look to their beginnings. For, 'tis answered that Man's life is not to be estimated from Accidents, but from its ordinated causes and course. He that sometimes slips, if he constantly order himself to God, uses to rise more strongly, and to have his very sin cooperate to his good. We know, too, that *Alms extinguishes sin, as water extinguishes fire*: And the life both of Clergy-man and Lay-man consists in Alms, as far as 'tis good. For, 'tis the Clergy-mans duty to exercise Spiritual Works of Mercy; the Lay-mans to exercise corporal; though with this difference, that 'tis the substance of the

Clergy-

Clergy-mans work to do mercy, the use of temporals is accidental to him; but, the substance of the Lay-mans action, as such, is to look after temporals, and an accident (but an inseparable one if he be truly good) to have mercy corporally on his Neighbour. Nor, though one that uses the world slip often, does he therefore lose his eternal Felicity, so he be careful not to lose the habit of virtuous action.

CHAP. XIII.

Of Prayer, and certain Motions in the Prayer of the Mysticks.

§. 1. IT follows now that we descend to declare in some measure the manner of Christian action: This is specially to be regarded in Inward action, as being more directly refer'd to Charity; and by a common name 'tis call'd *Prayer*. It consists of acts of the

Understanding and Affections: and immediately a double way discovers itself. For, some so apply their whole force to Affection, that they are not solicitous to model their thinking: some believe the modeling and forming of their intellections absolutely necessary, though they place the main force in Affections. For, we do not here repeat the above-determin'd question, Whether the better way to perfection be by intellectual judgments, or by affections. These last therefore say, that, as we are told 'tis the custom of Orators, and we see in the Orations of the Antients, they first propose their reasons to the Auditors, then move their affections; so also so it ought to be done in the way of Christian Life. Whence, first proposing motives, they endeavor to convince the Understanding into what they would have: afterwards, at the end of the Exercise, they labour to stir up the affections. Though they advise, that if affections otherwise fall in, this prescribed order is to be neglected, and the affection follow'd which God imprints for, this they believe is the fruit and end of the Exercise.

S. 3

§. 2. On the contrary, others enjoyn (besides composing the Soul so that who prays understand he comes to God and ought to be attentive that no forrein thoughts distract his mind from God, and to expect what, as it were from heaven, falls into it) to prepare nothing for the Understanding to chew, by which occasion may be given for some determinate affection: Nay, if any Illumination happen, that is not to be enforc'd, but all the sollicitude ought to be about the affections; to wait for their Tyde, to press them on when they are felt, and as much as possible to stay upon them. It appears, therefore, that both place the good of Prayer in Affections: to wit, both think that affections are not unfrequently infus'd into the Soul by the immediate operation of God; but, these will have that operation to be onely waited for, those, to be extracted. And, if the Expecters are of antient-standing in spiritual exercises, and such as are ready furnish'd with Divine Considerations, they do the same as the Extracters: for they are in the same state almost as Beginners are after consideration, and so there is not any

wide difference: but, if the question be of Beginners, it will not be so much of the substance and quality of Prayer, as of the manner of training up to Piety, which belongs to another place.

§. 3. But, what nearer concerns us and our purpose, is, that they, who call themselves Mysticks, or who seek piety by this way of Expecting, think there are certain acts or changes in the Soul, which they explicate by Metaphorical Names: concerning which 'tis to be enquir'd what good they contain. Now they are partly such as by which the Soul acts outwardly or pours out it self, partly such as it, in a manner, suffers from God. To Effusion seem to pertain *Fervor*, *Ebriety*, *Gluttony*, *Eructation*, and certain inordinate motions of the Members, which are commemorated by the very Authors themselves. And, of the same nature seem to be, to pious men too of the other School, *Aspirations*, *Groans*, *Tears*, *Exultations*, but, more moderate and more subject to the command of those that have them. But, those operations which affect the Soul inwardly are, for the most part, *Fainting*, *Melting*, *Death*, *Annihilation*, be-

being *on fire* or *Burning*. Now, 'tis needless to advise the Reader that all these are understood spiritually; though sometimes they have corporeal effects joyn'd with them, by which what is done inwardly is, as it were, represented. Of each of them something must be said; rather to avoid the reproach of their obscurity, and of a certain affectation to express nothing under a mask of big words, than that otherwise they are obscure in themselves.

§. 4. And, as for *Fervor*, 'tis plain, that, in corporeals, 'tis a motion springing from Love: for example, when, at the presence of the Beloved, the blood runs from the heart to the exterior parts, and the Lover grows hot and active. And, in spirituals, it signifies a promptitude of mind to Prayer and spiritual exercises. 'Tis a known affection and common to both Disciplines: for, though these Expecters seem to do nothing while they are in prayer, but to suffer onely; yet, if they are prompt and attent to receive while they are in prayer, and prompt to fall to prayer, they will justly be said *fervent*. What *Ebriety* is in the *body* there's no need

to explicate; 'tis the *spiritual* is meant in that of the *Canticles*, *Be ye inebriated my Dearest!* and 'tis described by the Mysticks, when there's a redundance of consolations, so that they over-fill: as in *S. Xaverius*, when he cry'd out, *It is enough, Lord, 'tis enough.* Here some may question, whether it be a thing desirable or no? since many Saints have declin'd it; as 'tis written of *S. Catharine of Genoua*, and others. But, it must be answer'd, that 'tis in it self determinately neither virtue nor vice, good nor bad, but a certain *indifferent* motion, serving instead of Milk to beginners and little ones; which the strong refuse, as distracting the mind and intention from other operations which solidly nourish and strengthen Charity.

CHAP. XIV.

Farther, of the particular Motions.

§. 4. SPiritual *Gluttony* they call an excessive appetite to spiritual delights:

lights: which because some Spirits use to receive specially in the Sacraments of the Eucharist and Penance, therefore they affect them too-much. There want not some who lay to their charge, that they go to the Sacred Tribunals sacrilegiously; because they confess not their sins, but only that they have not corresponded with inspirations, inciting them to observe the Councels. Wherein there lurks a double errour: One, that they think it no sin, not to observe these Councels: For though, as to mankind, Councels are one thing, Precepts another; because those things that are call'd Councels are not the best for all; yet, to a particular person, there is nothing Councel which is not Precept too; since reason perswades to follow what is best in these circumstances, and not to follow it is against reason. The other errour is, that they think Sacriledg is committed, if a Confessor absolves what he believes to be a sin, when really 'tis not. which, were it true, in how many scruples would Priests be involv'd? But, Sacriledg is a moral thing, and not committed without

some defect of Will and irreverence in the committers. Add, that those sins we call Venial, or defect of our actions in light circumstances, are so affixt to humane conversation, that there are very few actions of beginners excusable from them.

§. 2. Spiritual *Eructations*, and inordinate motions extending to the body it self, are not *proper* to the Mysticks, or not-discoursers, unless perhaps in excess. They are commendable sometimes, but not to be admir'd: for, all Symptoms of virtue are to be commended, though they be not fully purg'd from all defect. Nor is there any doubt but they proceed from God operating supernaturally; since they are in devout persons, out of the force of good thoughts, and exercises of piety. For, we must not think that, if any thing be supernatural, the same must presently be perfect: for, God accommodates himself to the receivers of his influence, ev'n when he supernaturally gives it: as, in *Isaiah* he spoke like a Courtier, in *Amos* like a Shepherd. Whence, I should not que-

 stion

ſtion but, if any ſuch ſhould, like the Sacrificers to *Bacchus* and the *Menades*, run up and down the fields; theſe motions were to be corrected ev'n by force, if they could not by reaſon. Yet, I do not therefore deny it to be from God working ſupernaturally: as there want not thoſe, who confeſs that *Judith* did not well when ſhe ly'd; and yet they are forc'd to aſſert ſhe actually operated, ev'n then, out of the force of a ſupernatural intention. For, not every ſupernatural operation is immediately from God, (if any be ſo; for this is preſum'd by Divines without ſufficient ground;) and therefore, without prejudice to the ſubſtance of the action, it may, through the defect of the Inſtruments, be accidentally vitious. Certainly, *David* when he danc'd before the Ark, ſeems to have ſtrein'd decency ſomething; though he acted out of an affection extremely pleaſing to God; and was unduly reprehended by his Wife.

§. 3. But, 'tis to be remark'd, that theſe motions, though by Authors aſcribed to vice, are yet by the Antients counted virtuous. For the vitiouſneſs lies

lies not in the affections, but in the excess of them. For, certainly that confus'd manner of the Apostles breaking out altogether into the Divine Praises (so that every one of them, indeed, prais'd God, but the Church was edifi'd by none) had a clear face of Ebriety, sent upon them by the H. Ghost, on purpose that an occasion might be given to the people of looking into the truth, and understanding the force of the Holy Spirit. In like manner S. *Chrysostom* exhorts us to frequent the B. Sacrament with that affection, as Infants bear to their Mothers breasts; whom nothing excuses from Gluttony, but their want of reason. *Ebriety*, therefore, and Gluttony, and sudden and vehement breakings out into good words, are motions that have virtue in them, so they be subject to reason; and that the too-muchness, which they speak, be in respect of *other* affections, not in respect of the command of Reason. But, these affections, as also the rest we are yet to speak of, are not proper to the Mysticks; though perhaps they are more vehement in them, because they less curb the reins of the Appetite.

§. 4.

§. 4. To render an account of the inward motions, we muſt reflect on a piece of Iron in the fire. Firſt, it grows all fiery, then ſoft, afterward it melts, and at laſt is exhal'd, and remains no longer Iron. Whilſt 'tis fiery, it has the joynt action of fire and Iron, ſo that each retains a kind of equality. Thus, in ſome ſouls, the actions of humane nature and ſupernatural ones go along together; ſo that what befits Man, is univerſally done for Gods ſake, or the actions proceed as it were from two co-ordinate motives. In others, the action of Nature grows weak, and languiſhes, and God alone, for the greater part, is regarded. In others, humane nature is entirely led by Divine Inſpiration; as Divines explicate the gifts of the H. Ghoſt. In others, laſtly, Nature ſeems to be not at all the principle of motion, but purely to follow Grace. Of theſe laſt there are three Metaphors: the firſt *languiſh*, the next are *melted*, the laſt are *exhal'd*. *Languiſhing* the Spouſe expreſſes, when ſhe waited for the embraces of her Spouſe (*Cantic. Ch.* 2.) *Liquefaction*, when ſhe runs after him through dangers and afflictions

fictions (Ch. 5.) *Exhalation* is describ'd (Ch. 8.) *Who is this that ascends from the Desart, flowing with delights, resting on her Beloved!*

§. 5. *Of Death and Annihilation*, or *Transfusion*, or *Transubstantiation into God*, we have already said above (Ch. 11. §. 1. 2.) that they neither can really and truly be done, nor, if they could, by a kind of renunciation, were it ordinately done according to the Law of God. But, a certain calumny is to be taken off from the Mysticks manner of speaking. For, I am apt to believe they have both deriv'd from S. *Dionysius* the *Areopagite* this Dithyrambical phrase, and make use of it for the same reasons he did. Now, I see chiefly two: One is, because the objects they speak of are so elevated above the objects of Sciences, and other things men are accustom'd to; that howmuchsoever they seem by terms to exaggerate their height, yet in reality they fall much below the dignity of the things, nor can possibly reach it. The other is, because our Nature is so slow to conceit any great matter in spiritual actions, that all Hyperbolics are no

more

more than need to excite it. Wherefore, 'tis not the Mysticks are to be blam'd for declaiming in so loud and lofty a stile; though they speak but what others know already; but others, for not applying all the grace of Eloquence to such sublime things. Again, neither are they to be upbraided for proposing these things ev'n to Women: for, there are among them some choice persons, that are nothing inferiour to Men.

§. 6. Yet, I intend not by this wholly to excuse their defects in chusing the Subjects to communicate their things to; or ev'n in their Discipline and Institution, (for there is nothing thorowly perfect:) but, to wipe off the calumnies undeservedly impos'd on them; as the Readers will easily see.

CHAP.

CHAP. XV.

Of the affections following Mystical and Metaphysical Theologies.

§. 1. But, we must go forward, and descend to those actions which are conformable to the three Theologies we have explicated. And, as to the Mystick, 'tis apparent enough, that the proper motions following it are comprehended in Admiration and Desire. Its Admiration is the very Adoration which flows out of it: for, external Adoration depends from other things not yet explicated. Its mental prayer is a turning up and down its unknown object before the mind's eyes; out of a design to render this contemplation familiar, and easie; and perpetual, and to encrease Desire, And; doubtless, in both these the Mystick may and will advance; to the very end of

of this life, if he purſue them diligently. Yet, 'tis not to be thought he ſhould advance ſo far, that the object it ſelf ſhould become clear to him: but, that his continual Prayer will render this ſtill more and more evident to him, that the true knowledg of the object will be farther and farther off from him, till the walls of his Fleſh are diſſolv'd. Whence, his deſire of Death and hope of diſſolution encreaſes. The greater this proficiency is, the eaſier is the operation: and it ſeems to him that operates, that he does nothing, becauſe he feels not the pains he takes in it. For all that, he *does* or is active ſtill more and more: but more happily and ſweetly; nature it ſelf, not now forcedly, but freely running to this contemplation. When, upon command, or other occaſion, he falls to Vocal Prayer, he ruminates with himſelf all he can the perfecteſt ſenſe of the words; not the obvious, but, as it were, Philoſophical one.

§. 2. He looks on himſelf as a Tree in a Wood, or a Sheep in a Deſart; of whom none but common Providence takes any care: He conſiders God and the

the Saints as not at all concern'd wh
becomes of him, whether blessed
miserable. His exercise therefore, p
culiar to him as a Mystick, is neither
the way of praise, nor thanksgiving, n
petition either to God or the Saint
but to work in his soul such dispos
ons as most immediately produce be
titude. He knows, indeed, that he c
do nothing besides the order of Natu
and God: and therefore he is void
vain-glory and Pride. He consider
that whatever he does will be for G
greater glory; and that God takes c
of his own glory; and that neither
nor the salvation or benefit of others
properly the end prefixed to him
the management of his life; whe
fore, he is wholly bent upon procur
his own good, which he knows to
plac'd in his desire of seeing God. T
Felicity he looks on as easie to be
quir'd, if he be not wanting to hi
self: since the whole order of Nature
so fram'd as to advance Man to th
and so much the more, the direc
path he takes. That by his own ac
ons, therefore, not others pray'rs,
ought to prepare an access for hi

ſelf: that there's no mercy, if his ſoul at Death be found unworthy; no hindrance, if it be rightly diſpos'd. He conſiderately deſigns the order of his life; this eſpecially, that his preſent ſtate or manner of living be the fitteſt for him to work out his own ſalvation. The parts or durable operations of this he ſeriouſly examines, whether they be conformable to his prefixed end, before he imbraces them: his momentany actions he goes about rather with prudence and ſagacity, then ſcrupulous examination. If he chance to ſin, he computes it among the accidents of humane life, and ſtrives to make it work afterwards to his good; nor is ſo anxious for ſuch when paſt, as cautious to prevent them. If any part of his life include the cultivating of his Neighbour, he applies it that way as earneſtly as ever he can. All theſe things, to the utmoſt of his power, he executes by calm and clear judgments: vehement motions of the body he admits as ſeldome as poſſible; but, thoſe which either prevent reaſon, or cloud it in its working, with all his force he keeps off. This, upon the mat-

ter, is the life of a Mystick Divine! how like 'tis to that which has vulgarly assum'd this name, let the Mystick Writers see.

§. 3. The Scholastick or Metaphysical Divine, first, contemplates in God that He is a *Thing* enjoyable; in this that he is in the rank of Existence, that He is the plenitude of *Thing*; that He is a Womb big with all that has the notion of *Being* in it. Then, he proposes to himself in God the endowments of a *Person*; that is, of an Intellectual Nature: and so God, who was before judg'd a *Thing*, now is said to be Omnipotent; consequently Omniscient, or who has, as it were, centred in one point the *Idea* of all things to be made or done innate to him: containing in that *Idea* all causes and effects, and that they are such there both objectively, not as if any thing were a cause why God made another thing; but, that God is the cause why one created thing is the cause of another. Whence he collects, that God does *This*, that the entire work may be most perfect: and that the parts of the work are the fittest for the work it self.

Thence

Thence he sees it follow, that God forewills all things, and makes the second-causes actually cause: and that all the singularities and manners both of them and their effects spring and derive their perfection from Gods willing. Whence it follows, if God has not fore will'd any thing, that, out of its own illness or defect of actuality, *is not*. So that, God is the cause of every existent thing, and of all existence; the creatures Nature (which has this in it, *not-to-be*, unless it receives from God *to-be*) is the cause of not-existence or defect. The Angels he looks on as Gods Ministers, acting what most conduces to our Salvation, because so 'tis best; not without a special care of us, but not out of any special affection or inclination towards us. The Saints he regards, as such whose wills are fix'd in God, and determin'd to other things out of the very determination of God. Himself and his Neighbours he beholds, as whom God and the Angels, according to the common rules of Providence, take care of, but will change nothing in favour of persons.

§. 4. Therefore, he behaves himself

ſelf as one intelligent perſon ought, in reſpect of another. He fixes his Faith on God, as ſpeaking; his Hope, as benign; his Charity, as on the beſt and excellenteſt Perſon. Moreover, he exerciſes Adoration; renders Thanks and Praiſe; laſtly, he addreſſes Petitions, too: becauſe all theſe motions are connatural between intelligent perſons. But, as to Charity, he omits not its chief act, which is carry'd to God as a *Thing* or *Being*. As to his Petitions, they are more Deſires than Petitions: for, he expects not to *move* God or the Saints, nor thinks he thus fit; but he endeavours to perfect his own ſoul by connatural motions towards an intelligent perſon. The objects of his Petitions are, the perfection of the world, which Chriſt teaches us to ask in the *Lords Pray'r*; what's neceſſary for himſelf both in common and in particular, Charity by which ſins are remitted, and the Direction of Divine Providence by which they are prevented. For others he prays abſolutely for nothing in particular: for he knows that he is ignorant what is to be, according to the rules of Divine Provi-

Providence. In like manner, neither does he beg any temporal good for himself; because he knows not what in these is fittest for his Salvation. Therefore, he leaves it to God, as who will provide for him better than himself is able: prepar'd to acquiesce in those things which God sends; though he endeavour to avoid temporal ills, according to the *dictamen* and inclination of Nature.

CHAP. XVI.

Of the affections following Metaphorical Theology; specially of Oblation.

1. HE that pursues the third Theology has none but purely humane apprehensions: which though be correct by judgments, yet he does it with so short discourse, that his judgment reaches but imperfectly his particular actions. But his actions are

govern'd as if, triumphing all the while, he were imploy'd with an excellent man, who had all Science and Power. All his endeavour aims at this, to please God, taking it for a fundamental principle, that God is pleas'd with good actions, and ang'red with ill. And apprehending him to be a Law-giver, who out of his own good pleasure, has written certain Laws, and proposed them to the faithful to be observ'd, not because, of themselves, they are fittest for humane Nature; but because he, the God of all, pleases to have these done. Therefore he has no other principle for judging what is good and right, what nought and devious, but as the action propos'd is conformable or disformable to the words in which the precept is deliver'd. He believes firmly what he hears of God, not because he sees with a reflecting eye any firm reason why he should believe; but, because either he has not heard any reasons to doubt of the things propos'd, or they have had no force with him: yet, he believes aright; because really he follows (led by right natural reason) an infallible Authority, though perhaps

perhaps he knows it not distinctly, or Scientifically to be such.

§. 2. He hopes in God, as it were in a perfectly good man, and able to fulfil his Promises; but, like one that travels in a Desart by a Load-stone, not knowing *how far* he goes right or wrong: yet, he goes securely, because he is carry'd by a sincere affection; which truly makes the Soul good; even when the material action is erroneous. He loves God, as we use to praise illustrious men in true and feigned Histories, and in Tragedies; because those things are told of them, which are honour'd and joy'd in illustrious men amongst us. Though he have heard Beatitude is plac'd in the Vision of God; yet he, on the matter, understands this, as Courtiers esteem themselves Blessed, if they be admitted to the presence of the Prince: Otherwise, he apprehends true Beatitude in I know not what, corporeal Palaces, Walks, Badges of Honour and Splendour, Coronets, and Pleasures like those we find in humane conversation; and in the company of Angels and Saints: either ignorant of or waving

its true notion. He loves his Neighbours, because he finds it so written; governing his benefiting them scarce by any rule or measure; but helping to his power all he meets. Meanwhile he weans his mind from temporal appetites, communicating his goods to the needy.

§. 3. He prays, expecting that God should then hear his prayers and give, whether to himself or his friends, what he prays for; changing that order of things he had before appointed: yet not in vain; since he both works good to his own Soul, and puts one of the causes necessary to that effect which he asks of God, if it be to be done. He believes he does a thing acceptable to God, if he praise him, if he compassionate the sufferings of Christ: In like manner, that he does a thing acceptable to the Saints, if he magnifie them, if he keep their Feasts, if he extol their works, excuse their infirmities, and such like; and he conceives a great hope of their favour if he perform those extern offices, thinking that the Saints rejoyce, and as it were, glory in such worship: Nor is this in vain; because

by

by such performances he feeds Hope and Charity in his own Soul. If he have any way fall'n, he repents; protesting grief to God, and imposing punishments on himself, and expecting God will be propitious to him: Nor in vain; for these things change his mind, that is, render God propitious; but, he sets no bounds to his penance, not regarding the fruit of his own Soul, but a certain voluntary turning of Gods mind, whereof he knows no rules. He mortifies his appetites and bodily members, that they may be conformable to Christ: And very well; because by these things his mind is corrected; but that intention has no set limitation.

§. 4. Acts of Adoration, Fear, Thanksgiving, Resignation, and whatever others prescrib'd by Devotion, he exercises as it were to an excellent man, that sees all, and estimates things after the manner of men. One act there is which may seem to deserve some explication: 'tis call'd *Oblation*; in which the moderns think they have discover'd some Mystery. For, from Antiquity and the Practise of the Church,

Church, we learn three Oblations: of the Sacrifice, of exteriour Goods, and of the Saints Merits. The Oblation of the Sacrifice is a Ceremony instituted by God in form of an Oblation; that our Prayers may be rendred the more fervent, because we offer to God a gift ordain'd by himself, that is, we unbloodily Sacrifice Christ our Lord. And, in this, the ceremony it self is the Oblation or Immolation of Christ. Nor is it call'd an Oblation, in that sense as Oblation is said to be a Donation or alienation of our own Dominion; for we never had any Dominion over Christ our Lord, nor is he either alienated from us, or rendred more God's then he was before: but there's a Typical Immolation exercis'd about him, nor is there any other notion of Oblation in the Christian Sacrifice. The middle sort of Oblations is indeed a Donation, yet not made to God, but to the Church: and 'tis improperly said to be made to God; for God receives no new Dominion, but the Church, and when 'tis call'd a Donation made to God, 'tis an improper Speech.

S. 5.

§. 5. The third Oblation, among the Fathers, and understanding Divines, and in the phrase of the Church, signifies no other then Representation: as when we say, *We offer to thee the Merits of Jesus Christ, or such a Saint*, the sense is but this, we pray that, through their intercession who by such merits are acceptable to God, He would do or give us this or that, which explication is clear and facil; and founded in the Sacred Scriptures and Fathers. But the Moderns devise I know not what kind of permutation; whereby, as it were in Justice, they extort from God whatever they labour to impetrate of him: for they seem to believe that they give God the just price of the things they ask; and confer as it were some vast good upon God. Which is strangely fond, and without doubt springs from *Pelagianism*; for, it supposes certain Goods which are not entirely Gods, but over which we have some power: which, in *Satisfactions*, they clearly speak out; in the rest, as it were covertly. So they think a man may make himself and his life God's, in another manner than 'tis his by Creation:

tion: not considering that when we consecrate our selves to good works, the Donation is made, not to God, but our selves; that is, we benefit our selves, not him.

§. 6. Yet, I am not scandaliz'd that pious Souls, who see nothing higher than humane Customes, and acts of Love, and obliging language, transfer to God, use such like Oblations: but that those who are stil'd Masters of Piety, instead of solid precepts of virtue, should teach these empty trifles, and perswade pious Souls that Grace and extraordinary rewards are due to these acts, out of the excellency of the very acts, ought not to be tolerated.

OF PRAYER.

Second Book.

Of Prayer, which is in a manner the ſubſtance of Chriſtian Life.

CHAP. I.

How certain extraordinary effects happen without Miracle.

§. 1. TO this third ſtate, alſo, *Petition* properly belongs; which, in the other two, has rather the Nature of

of Desire that Petition. For, he that petitions expects to be heard, and to obtain. Whence, of necessity, such petitioners must be satisfi'd by God; that is, those things must be done which they, with strong desires and confidence, require: and so some, that they may rest perswaded that God mov'd by their pray'rs, order'd them. And, because this happens often to those that pray affectuously, it comes to pass that they are animated to do more things; and hence, that they receive more; and, by little and little there grows a kind of conversation and commerce with God; and the same 'tis with the Saints sometimes, according to the confidence which those that pray have conceiv'd of their intercession. From this frequency of prayers proceed effects unusual amongst men, some without doubt miraculous; others that seem such, though indeed they exceed not the power of the course of material causes. Whence, and how these grow, we must slowly and groaping-all-the-way enquire. This at least is clear, out of what has been said, that the Origin of all, or certain

tainly the most of them, lies in Faith, or a firm expectation that God will answer our Petition. Whence, too, that is highly commended in the H. Scriptures: Christ our Lord ascribing ev'n his own Miracles to the Faith of the Askers; and so often exhorting to Faith, and reproaching his Apostles that they had not Faith.

§. 2. But, to enter upon the difficulty it self, this we take out of Physicks for an unquestionable Principle, that *by the vehemence of Melancholy any dispositions may be made in a sensible and waking man, that are wont or can be made by force of Nature in one that sleeps and dreams.* For, since 'tis a most experienc't thing in Frenetical persons, that it exceeds not the power of their disease, to make those things exteriourly appear to exist and be done, which have causes only within in the very brain: as clear it is, that such like apparitions exceed not the causes or humours, whose excess produces these diseases. Yet, 'tis not presently to be infer'd, that these men who suffer any thing of this Nature are Frenetical: for, not every excess is esteem'd that

disease,

diſeaſe, but that only which univerſally corrupts the natural functions and very action of man; or is to ſo great a degree, that it permits not the life to be led according to humane principles. We muſt add, that moſt common in thoſe who are given to Studies, Meditation and Prayers, abound with (at leaſt, acquir'd) Melancholy: for, the conſtancy requiſite in theſe ſcarce happens without a great mixture of black Choller. A ſanguine complexion, too, has a great force to ſtrengthen Fancy.

§. 3. Out of what has been ſaid eaſily appears, that many effects which are admir'd in perſons given to prayer, as ſupernatural gifts of God, are wrought in pious ſouls by the very force of Prayer. What's more frequent in Virgins famous for Sanctity, then to hold it for certain to themſelves that our Lord Chriſt ſtands by them either conſtantly or by intervals, though they do not ſee him? And, doubtleſs, 'tis no ſlight grace of God, and a certain guard of their mind, that they may walk as it were always in the Divine Preſence, and more faithfully perform their works, and recommend them

to God. But, to believe that Christ, leaving Heaven, is truly-corporally always at their side, and that, if more H. Virgins, in divers Countries or Cities, perswade themselves this same thing, Christ has really his Body extensively and (as they term it) circumspectively in so many places, goes beyond the Mystery of the Eucharist, and all Faith: and yet this is requir'd, to make us perswade our selves that God immediately communicates this certitude that Christ assists there. The like is to be said of Angels and Saints, who are conceiv'd to assist in the same manner. 'Tis, therefore, a certain effect and grace of God: but, not immediately infus'd by God or the Angels; but produc'd by means of not so much the strength as weakness of the Fancy, for the good of such a Soul.

§. 4. The same way will unriddle the intellectual answers and inspirations, which such like persons perceive made them. For, in sleep we experience that we talk with others, and that they sometimes begin the discourse, sometimes answer our questions; nor is it doubted but this happens by the agita-

tion of our Fantasmes, without the
higher principles immediately moving
us: is it not much easier to hear, by
the same force of Fancy, a voice or
sentence utter'd by another person, who
were: I believe there's scarce any one
that, to any degree, observes what
passes in his mind, but sometimes finds
some truths slip into him, of which he
thinks of nothing less, whose principle
he knows not. Add to this, never a
little of Fancy, apprehending the pre-
sence of some Spirit, as even now
declar'd: and you see the thing is done,
that the pious Soul nothing doubts it-
self Illuminated or Inspir'd by God by
some supernatural instrument; but
she have been before sollicitous about
such a Truth, that her Pray'r or Petition
is answer'd. And, if indeed the re-
veal'd truth be, either of it self, that
is, in the Terms, evident, as in Scien-
ces, or joyn'd with great likelihood,
as it often happens in practical things,
the answer will be truly from God,
though not immediately and super-
turally, but by the force and *Series* of
material causes, which God has insti-
tuted for this purpose from the begin-
ning.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of the Prayer call'd Petition, and its effects.

§. 1. FRom this step the advance is easie to that, where such like Souls believe themselves visited by Christ and the Saints, and entertain'd with many *caresses*; but by these it appears plain enough, that 'tis all a work of Fancy. As, when they feel their heart wounded, when they think they feel Christ's heart beat, or that they change hearts with Christ, and many such like things; which either Nature or the State of the Immortality of Christ's Body permit not to be believ'd that they are really done. In like manner, when Christ appears in the form of a Child, or all bloody as in his Crucifixion, or scourg'd all over, yet so as that he appears not to others, but to one Soul alone; though he seem to be without doors, or to sit, or stand, or

walk. For, there's ſcarce any argument in theſe to make us believe any effect exceeding the force of Fancy: though 'tis not to be deny'd God does theſe things mediately, by natural inſtruments, for the advance of ſuch a ſoul. Whence, both notable affections are apt to riſe from theſe very Illuſions, and ev'n no mean ſpiritual proficiency, if they have intelligent Directors, who are able to ſever the direct from the oblique: and permit not theſe Viſionaries to be confident of themſelves, but make them ſubmit thoſe very things, whether ſublime or common, which ſeem dictated by Chriſt or the Saints, to Theological examination. For, this ſame force of Melancholy is apt to ſharpen the underſtanding, and form ſublime conceits; as the Author of *the Tryal of Wits* proves and illuſtrates by examples. The like things, though not ſo well hanging together, experience teaches us, happen in Dreams.

§. 2. Out of what we have ſaid, any one may eaſily collect how moſt of thoſe things which ſo frequently occur in the lives of H. Virgins may be done without any Miracle: and which follows, that

that we ought to proceed cautiously and prudently in them. I speak as to the interiour things; which can be known only by the report of the relaters. Now, we must ad concerning those things which pass farther, upon others too; and so are approv'd by a greater, and less-fallacious testimony. To examine which we must know, that the body of an Animal, nourished as it were by an inward fire, perpetually shoots out extreme thin vapours into the circumstant air; which sometimes are so full of fire, that they may be perceiv'd by the smell, nay ev'n by the eyes: as appears in those that sweat, and those whose hair sometimes shines as it were all in a flame. Hence, Dogs find Wild Beasts and their Masters by smell; from, the scent which their footing has left upon the grass or the ground. Of these the subtillest are those which issue from the Animal Spirits: whose seat, though judg'd to be in the Nerves spread all the body over, yet is chiefly founded in the brain, their Fountain and Sacred Treasury; where they are both begotten out of the Vital Spirits fuming from the heart,

and exercise their chief Operation, viz. subserviency to knowledg.

§. 3. We must know farther, that these exhalations, the thinner they are both diffuse themselves the wider, and are less hindred from their natural progress by the shock of other bodies: as we see that Light, which is a River of most subtle fiery parts, is not hindred by wind, because of the perpetual succession of its extremely-minute parts, which, by their multitude and celerity so dissect the exhalation whereof the wind is made, that the whole *Medium* appears always lucid. And, 'tis plain, while the whole man spends himself on his brain, as it happens in Rapts and Extasies, and ev'n in ardent either thinking or pray'r; that, in a manner, the whole Mass of his Animal Spirits is crowded together in his brain: and so a greater abundance of exhalations must needs break out thence into the circumstant air; and, if they are apt to have any effect on the circumstant bodies, at that time they must exercise it chiefly and strongliest. This also we must borrow from Nature, that many of the actions of the Vegetative Soul

in an Animal are either chiefly done by the Imagination, or at least not without it. 'Tis seen by experience, that the fancy has an influence on many operations of the Vegetative Powers, as the voiding of Excrements, and taking in of Nourishment, &c. And therefore, whatever can work on the Fancy, will have a great power also upon the vegetable operations.

CHAP. III.

Of the operation of Pray'r about others.

§. 1. SInce, therefore, the things which those that pray operate about others belong either to Knowledg, or to some Vegetation: 'tis plain that, by an impression made on their Imagination, either the effect it self will entirely follow, or, at least, a no-slight initiation of the effect to be carried on by other causes. Suppose, therefore, one in an Extasie, who prays most

ardently for another, that either is a-sleep, or buſied about the ſame thought, or has his mind ſollicitouſly diſpos'd, but vacant and indetermin'd: Is it not clear, both that there will be very ſtrong exhalations of the Animal-ſpirits of the perſon that prays; and (if there be any ſuch force in the brain to direct them abroad, as we find exercis'd within the body) that they will be chiefly directed towards the perſon pray'd for, in caſe it be known where he is? Again, that perſon, by reaſon of his Fancy's either emptineſs or adaptation to the Object from which theſe emanations ſpring, is apt to feel the leaſt paſſions deriv'd from that object, and to form Images conformable to thoſe motions made in his brain. Whence it will follow, (if what our laſt Parentheſis ſuppoſes be true) that ſome Viſion may be begotten in him that's pray'd for, conformable to the pray'r, and the motion which he that pray'd caus'd in his brain by thoſe evaporations: And, becauſe *Ariſtotle* and experience teach us that the motions, which without are but faint, within are great and ſtrong in the va-

cant

cant mind; it may happen, that vehement pray'r may produce great mutations in the mind and body of him that is pray'd for.

5. 2. By this discourse may be collected that those Histories are not altogether vain, which are partly written by great men, partly taken from the daily Narrations of men worthy to be credited, concerning Dying and Melancholy persons: for which yet there appears no occasion of allowing a mixture of causes above the power of Nature. S. *Hierom* is cited by *Angestus* to say, that a lascivious man, though unknown, offends, by unseen motions, the chast minds of the company: and hence it seems possible to have risen, that some are said to have perceiv'd it by their smell, if any one had polluted himself with Venery. Why not? when Authors write that the purest Emralds suffer from such persons; and others, that Bees are sensible of them. Like this is that of the same Author, that the vapours proceeding from a person whose head ran upon a murther, terrifi'd others who thought of no such thing. One well vers'd in the world,

and

and no fool, has assur'd me, that in
sleep he saw a man, he ne're before
seen, assaulting himself, and so
sing him, that he was forc'd, ev
gainst his will, to run him throu
which the next day really happened.
nother eminent Writer relates, th
redible person told him he had see
his sleep a man he knew not, clap
him up into Prison; which in like
ner was done the day after. Anot
who am I cannot but believe, told
that himself and his three Brothers
Sisters saw his Father, who lay a d
on his bed, pass hard by them. A
there's no end of such like Stories.

§. 3. Let us add to what has be
said, that if the Health of an Anim
consists herein, that the Animal Sp
rits (on which is substantially allo
the Vital and Natural) freely, upon
motion of the Fancy, do their offic
and perform both the vegetative a
sensitive actions; it follows, that I
firmity or Disease springs from som
impediment obstructing the free mo
on of the foresaid Spirits: Whence
that which removes such impediment
apt to be the cause of Health. If, there

fore,

fore, any ones infirmity proceeds from weakness of Spirits, unable to break through that which obstructs their course: 'tis plain that, by the immission of new Spirits from another Animal, such a Disease is apt to be cur'd. Whence, 'tis credible that one person may recover health, by the fervent pray'r of another. And, because the conceit of recovering health is apt to make the sick persons spirits attempt those passages, which in health they passed thorough; it happens, that such conceit much conduces to the cure, and as it were initiates it. Whence, no wonder that the Faith of the sick is requir'd to their curing: Wherefore, in the *Acts of the Apostles*, we read that a certain person had Faith enough to make him be cur'd, and therefore he was cur'd. It may be added, that such motion of the spirits in the sick, as it were, attracts the spirits sent out by him that prays, and so causes perfect health.

§. 4. These things are not written to this end, that what God works by Miracle should be thought perform'd by the force of Nature. But, that, because

cause many such like are done by the force of Nature, diligent scrutiny may be us'd to discern when any thing is to be assign'd to Gods special Providence when to his Universal: and it may not rashly be impos'd on God, that he has set his Seal to it, which has the force of an infallible testimony; when, by the paths of errable Nature, any thing extraordinary happens. Besides, that we may understand that God, ev'n in those things which he operates by that Power whereby he subjects all things to himself, deserts not Nature, as far as it can assist; but elevates it to those things its ability reaches not. And so we find that *Christ*, for the most part, attributed his Miracles to the Faith of the Sick, and stir'd up Faith in *Martha* and the Father of the Lunatick, before he wrought the Miracles: Farther, 'tis written, that sometimes he could not do a Miracle, by reason of the peoples infidelity. So *Saul*, so the Daughter of *Raguel* were heal'd, by Musick and Fumigations; God making use of second causes, as far as they would go, and supplying by his Omnipotency what they wanted: and perhaps Christ ex-

pell'd

sell'd the *Geraſen* Devils by the Hogs into the Sea; inſinuating that the diſpoſition, by means of which they poſſeſt thoſe fierce men, was deſires of carnal pleaſures and Swiniſh uncleanneſſes, by which they were enraged, as appear'd in the Hogs.

CHAP. IV.

Of the particular ſorts of Prayer.

§. 1. I Muſt not leave this Head, till I have remark'd a certain cuſtome of that holy man *Gregory Lopez*; who neither by letters nor by viſits us'd to help thoſe that deſir'd it of him, but turn'd himſelf to God by Pray'r, and ſaid, that negotiating with God was far better then negotiating with men: which I underſtand to ſignifie, that 'tis eaſier remedying the needy by appealing to the Divine Goodneſs, then by thoſe helps which humane conſideration ſuggeſts. Which, as on the one

ſide,

side, 'tis manifestly true, (for since the heart of man is inscrutable, one man really knows not what is good for another, and often pours out in vain his excellent words; but God, who searches the hearts, puts into him such thoughts, as go directly to and touch his heart, and most easily cure his malady:) So, on the other side, it shews that that man had a strange familiarity with God, so that he question'd not to receive a Determination from God by pray'r. Whence is collected the great virtue of Pray'r, and as it were the Omnipotency of it: since it seems to make use even of the Divine Omnipotency it self, and when it pleases to borrow it of God, as one Neighbour asks some vessel of another, and is not deny'd him.

§. 2. Out of what has hitherto been said of pray'r, 'tis evident, that the *Third* kind of Theology and pray'r is absolutely the most profitable; how much soever in excellency of Nature it yield to the others. For, first, this is common to the whole Church; and so common, that the greater part of the Church can neither understand nor aspire

ſpire to the ſuperiour kinds, which would utterly ſpoil their devotions ſhould they apply themſelves to ſuch ſublime ſpeculations, for they would want that ſuccour which God has provided mankind from the body and appetitive motions. For, as we experience that Memory, begotten by the material ſtroaks of Fancy, is highly neceſſary to humane ſpeculations, ſo we ſee, too, that cuſtome, gotten by many appetitive motions, renders operation ſweet, and ſo, in a manner, natural, that 'tis hard to leave it. Theſe motions, therefore, duly apply'd to pray'r muſt needs be of mighty force, both to make the very ſpiritual impreſſions more ſtrong and frequent, and to exclude roavings and other either thoughts or motions. Add that ev'n thoſe, who uſe the other kinds of prayers, neither can begin with them, nor perhaps ever uſe them alone: though, the more they advance by exerciſe, ſo much the more abundantly they uſe thoſe, and ſo much the leſs the inferiours.

§. 3. But, to paſs over in ſilence the degrees of Pray'r, both ſo much celebrated

brated and deepliest concerning our Treatise, were to be wanting to my duty. Let us remember, therefore, that as Man is formally an Animal virtually an Intelligence: so, of necessity, Humane Acts, how much soever they contain and shew a kind of spiritual virtue, must be material and corporeal formally; and so, certain agitations of the brain, terminating in this, that the *man understands*. For, since Intellection consists in this, that Man by it is an Existing or perfect Thing, and *first* that which himself is, and all other things as it were parts and consequents to himself: and this, too, consists herein, that the Man's own existence is by reflexion, as it were multiply'd upon it self: it comes to pass that Man is a thing in power to be himself accidentally and reflexively; and, which follows, that Intellective acts, or of Understanding, are motions of that thing as in such power, and the term of such motions is that the Animal we call *Man* is more and more *himself existent*. But, whether this be effected materially, by heaping together Fantasms to that part of the brain

by

by which we are things, or by pure impreſſion; and, as it were, excavation of that Particle, I leave undecided.

§. 4. Mental Pray'r, therefore, whereof we are to treat, cannot, for its material part, be other then a certain ordinate motion in the brain, whereby we are made Divine, or God; whether pure (in Himſelf,) or as in his Creatures, when we learn and admire him in his effects. Now, of mental pray'r, that kind is moſt imperfect which is call'd Meditation; and conſiſts in a certain Study, whereby we ſearch out new truths concerning God, or the Creatures in order to God: and herein only it differs from Theological commentation, that 'tis done out of an intention to promote the Affections; whereas Theology aims no farther then bare knowledg. A kin to Meditation is Contemplation, which is an intuition of the preacquired truths in order to the ſame effect, of exciting the affections to God: Whence it appears, that Meditation is a lower ſort of prayer, becauſe it is the way to the end, and Contemplation the end it ſelf. This being an Elevation of the mind to

God actually or *in facto esse*; the other only a tendance to it, or *in fieri*. Now is this only a perfecter degree of pray'r then is practis'd in Meditation, but truly pray'r it self: For, though there are other degrees of pray'r assign'd, yet, in reality, they are nothing but perfecter and perfecter Contemplation. For, I know not whether that be to be call'd a *species* of pray'r, or deserves a new name, which *Gregory Lopez* exercis'd, *viz.* rather continuing then repeating the same jaculatory expressions of which, after we have weigh'd the H. Virgin *Teresa*'s Doctrine, there will be occasion to discourse.

CHAP. V.

Of S. Teresa's *Pray'r.*

§. 1. I Shall deliver her meaning first in my words, as far as I understand it: then endeavour to accommodate her words to this sense. I see God carry'd on this Saint by four Stages or Stations, as it were: as the people

of *Israel* had many through the Wilderneſs, that they might forget the manners of the *Egyptians*. Her firſt ſtation was in the exerciſe of *Meditation* and *Contemplation*: in which ſhe underwent great troubles and inquietude from her yet-untam'd Nature. Her next was, as ſhe call'd it, that of *Quiet*. In this her mind, all the time of her pray'r, remain'd fixt in God; ſeeming ſo far from having any aſſiſtance from her inferiour powers; that they would rather have been a hindrance: which ſhews there remain'd ſtill ſome reliques of motions apt to diſtract the mind from pray'r. Next this, follow'd the Stage of *Recollection*, which ſeems to be plac'd in two things; that the Soul beholds God as it were exiſting in her ſelf, and therefore roves not about other objects; And that the inferiour powers, except ſome caſual motions of the Fancy, are no ways troubleſome, and therefore the mind is intenſly bent on God. The Supreme Stage is that of *Union*. This alſo lies, or ſeems to lie in two things; *viz.* That the inferiour powers now help the Soul; being themſelves converted to

God: and that the mind is certain God is conjoyn'd to it-ſelf. And this all is ſaid to be twofold: One, in which the operation of theſe powers is felt another higher, wherein that operation is wholly ſwallow'd up into the Mental.

§. 2. Thus far is the Saints meaning, as I think: but, whether have err'd, or hit it right, I am very ſollicitous; becauſe I ſearch ter the truth of Nature, not of other ſayings. However it be, I muſt ſuppoſe that, in the thing it ſelf, there neither any act which is not an act ſome material power, nor any which is purely of the Will, and of the Underſtanding. Whence, if any time we read ſuch like words grave Authors (not Scholaſtical ones I mean;) by the name of ſpiritual acts they are to be underſtood to ſignifie acts as proper to Men, no Animal motion over-ruling, but Reaſon being Miſtreſs; and under the name of acts of the Will, are meant acts of perfect or operative underſtanding: it being againſt reaſon to make an action of power which is not reaſonable follow from

from Intellect or Intellections; for since the forms of the things to be done, that is, the virtue and power of doing is in the very Intellect; 'tis evident that the active power it self, and the action issuing from it, must both of them be intellectual. Volition, therefore, is nothing else but Intellection, so perfect both in it self and its circumstant, that is, inferiour powers, that, on the mans side, there is no defect or resistance, but the effect follows; that is, 'tis such Intellection out of which, as to the Man's part, action actually follows. These grounds being laid, let us try to explicate the expressions of the Holy Saint, which without doubt are true, so we hit the sense of them.

§. 3. But, I must give the Reader notice what I think of these, as it were, Doctrinal Writings of this Virgin. For, as far as I can discover, she declar'd to her Confessors what she experienc'd in her own Soul. They, who were Scholasticks, and Philosophers in the School-way, taught her how those things were to be express'd, whereof her self had had experience. We, therefore, have receiv'd down the Saints

mind, not bare and ſimple, but cloath'd with their opinions; and, unleſs I am miſtaken, not very conſonant to Nature, if we ſeverely ſtick to the words. For, ſhe, being ſenſible of not the Powers but Acts, call'd certain Acts Powers. Exerciſe by force of diſcourſing topically ſhe call'd underſtanding; and when ſhe perceiv'd not that, ſhe deny'd the underſtanding then operated. She gave the title of Memory to voluntary Remembrance, which is exercis'd with deſign and pains: but, thoſe things which of themſelves occurr'd ſhe conſider'd not at all, or attributed them to God if they were good, and, when troubleſome, to Fancy. Whether ſhe diſtinguiſht Appetite from Will I am uncertain; for my Notes are ambiguous, nor is my Memory able, after ſo many years, to ſupply their defect. But, without doubt ſhe took notice of the more vehement impulſes of her Appetite, though in this diſcourſe ſhe found no need to commemorate them.

§. 4. Conſidering, therefore, theſe manners of Pray'r, firſt, 'tis clear, that the ſecond degree, that of *Quiet*, connaturally riſes out of much frequenting

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ing pray'r: for, of neceſſity, the more pray'r is frequented, the more muſt the affection to ſpiritual things encreaſe; and, which follows, the affections and troubleſomneſs of the thoughts about temporals decreaſe. Whence it will come to paſs that the Soul ſometimes in pray'r will find it ſelf free and quiet: wherein, as far as I underſtand, the H. Virgin places the notion of *Quiet Pray'r*. The third degree, too, that of *Recollection*, ſeems not much different. For, what ſhe teaches, that God is conſider'd as exiſting in the heart, is to be underſtood of the naked Deity, or of our Lord Chriſt. If of Chriſt, it ſeems too groſs a conceit for an illuminated perſon, to apprehend the corporal preſence of Chriſt in her heart. If of the naked Deity, either He is conceiv'd to be in our heart by his Eſſence, or by his Grace. If by his Eſſence; what is there to chuſe between apprehending it in us or in heav'n: for, 'tis a kind of material difference, belonging to the figuration of the place, previous to pray'r; not to the pray'r it ſelf: unleſs perhaps as it makes it eaſier for us to apprehend that God be-

holds our inmoſt thoughts, then when we conceit him in heav'n; which is a certain defect of Faith. But, if we apprehend his preſence by Grace, we think of God working ſupernatural virtues in us: which ſeems repugnant to that apprehenſion theſe perſons have, that they are moſt grievous ſinners.

CHAP. VI.

Of the Pray'r of Recollection; *and whence theſe degrees ſpring.*

§. 1. But, hence perhaps 'tis call'd pray'r of *Recollection*, and made a diſtinct degree, in that the Soul feels no impediment from her inferiour powers; as the Saint ſpeaks. For, in the former degree, though they were not ſtrong enough to take off the mind from the contemplation of her object; yet they ſeem to have been troubleſome, and to have render'd her leſs attentive

tentive as it were. For, the Saint tells us, that if one endeavour in that ſtate to repreſs them, he loſes the fruit and ſweetneſs of his pray'r, and 'twould more hinder then help. But, in this degree, ſhe makes them all quiet, except the Fancy, that is, caſual thoughts; which yet, not being the iſſue of the affection, hinder not the attention of the mind to its work. And ſo it appears, that this degree conſiſts in a greater quiet of the mind; becauſe the inferiour powers are more tam'd and obedient. The higheſt degree, *Union*, I am not ſatisfi'd whether it be ſo call'd by reaſon of Union with God, or Union of the Soul in it ſelf: And again, what ſignifies union with God? an apprehenſion of the Divine Preſence? or, an uninterrupted motion of the Soul towards God? But, this later ſeems to agree with the other degrees of pray'r: and 'tis ſaid not to laſt above half an hour, without a ſenſible trouble of the powers going out and returning.

§. 2. Let us reflect on them ſeverally. The Preſence of God ſeems manifeſtly to me to ſpeak an affection of Melan-

Melancholy. For, she expresses as if with her mind she saw Christ standing in a certain place; with a clear certitude that so it is, though under no figure or colour. Now, the designation of a corporeal place clearly demonstrates 'tis no spiritual knowledg, but deriv'd from Fancy: and, that being certain (since, on the contrary, 'tis certain Christ is not there, but in heav'n) shews 'tis no supernatural certitude. Evident, therefore, it is that, though by accident it may help pray'r, yet it has no priviledg to constitute a degree of superiority in it. Notwithstanding, the Union of the powers clearly brings a new degree; when now they are so far from hindring, that they are ev'n imploid about God. But, that they should be sometimes half-asleep, and yet understand their own operation, I know not what it means, in the rigour of the words: for, the inferiour powers are not cognoscitive, but preparative to knowledg; and man knows by his Intellect alone. Then, what is the force of that expression, *They understand their own operations?* If I may be permitted to gues, this is,

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the ſenſe of the ſacred Virgin; that ſometimes theſe powers turn aſide, if not wholly, at leaſt in part, to other objects, and only by halfs are carry'd to God; but, in the higheſt degree, they are wholly imploid in God.

§. 3. Now, that this degree of pray'r muſt needs be apt to follow, too, out of much uſe, will appear to him that looks into Nature. For, ſince affections follow apprehenſions, or motions of the Fancy: and, by much uſe of Fancy, a great ſtock of Fantaſms muſt needs be gather'd together, conducing to make a ſtroak and impreſſion on the Fancy: and, by a great multitude of Fantaſms apply'd about one object, the apprehenſion muſt of neceſſity be rendred ſo ſtrong, that the impreſſions, which other Fantaſms in leſs abundance make, at length are not felt at all, and mean while leſs and leſs ſtill: 'Tis plain that, by much uſe of pray'r, it comes no paſs that, for a-while, the operations of the inferiour powers about other by-objects are, firſt leſs and leſs, and afterwards not at all perceiv'd. Yet, that the inferiour powers are, neither thus, perfectly tam'd, the

Ebriety,

Ebriety, remaining after this pray'r, shews; which clearly is something corporeal and irrational; and to be overcome, as she her self declares. And thus it appears, that the degrees of Pray'r are well deduc'd by this Saint; as far as her Narration is not deform'd by her (herein unskilful) Masters: who, had they been better skill'd, we should perhaps have had something more exact concerning pray'r left by her; specially about the objects she contemplated in her pray'r, and her manner of expressing affections. Now, contenting our selves with having learnt so much of her; let us see what her great admirer, *Gregory Lopez*, has left us.

CHAP. VII.

Of the Pray'r of Gregory Lopez.

§. 1. THis Man, therefore, later then that H. Virgin in the same Age, herein had the advantage of her, that

that he needed not the help of Confessors, being himself fully taught of God; but rather was himself able to instruct them. Concerning whose Doctrine, let us touch on this, in the first place, which perhaps ought to have been reserv'd till the last, did not its continuedness to the former discourse render it easier, beginning from hence. This, therefore, which was the top of all in S. *Teresa*'s way, that the inferiour powers should totally concur to pray'r; this, *Gregory* taught, was to be overcome; and that these powers are not at all to be made use of. For, 'tis these, if I am not deceiv'd, he would express by the name of *Nature*. For, as far as I understand, whatever a Man does out of the love of God, or an intention of Beatitude, by the pure and clean discourse of Reason, descending from this End to the particular action, belongs to the Spirit, or Mind, or Grace; for, all these signifie one and the same thing, though under various connotates: but, what is done by a kind of blind *impiety*, whether principally or accessorily to the principal action, belongs to the notion of *Nature*. For, *Nature*,

ture, in this question, we call that which is common to us with Animals: Now, the operations of Animals are done by continuation to the motion of the Heav'ns, without any mixture of Intellect, or any variation by that.

§. 2. This doing all things out of the love of God seems performable two ways: One, that the pray'r should be exercis'd by pure judgments: the other, that it be done by affections indeed, but such as pass no farther then the brain: And, I could willingly have believ'd that *Gregory*'s exercises were perform'd the former way, did not his own expressions check it. For, sometimes he attests, he had perpetual groans and sighs within in his soul; though nothing appear'd outwardly. Sometimes he ev'n express'd them; as in that pray'r we find in *B.* 2. *Ch.* 12. *of his Life*, where he petitions God as it were expostulatorily. And *Ch.* 13. he gives an account of what he did; telling us that Nature filches away the food of the mind, unless heed be taken. But, *Ch.* 15. he teaches that the inward man sometimes exercises his operations so, that the outward man perceives nothing

thing of them. To understand his meaning, we must reflect that the affections of our soul cause motions, not only in the members wherein they are wrought, but also in our exteriour body; as when we laugh, weep, tremble; and there's scarce any affection in the soul more vehement then ordinary, but may be discern'd by the face; especially by the eyes. Now, according to the Proverb, *Force united is the stronger*; and, which follows, the weaker if it be dispers'd. That, therefore, which *Gregory* did was to keep all his spirits, that serv'd his affections, within in the application of his brain; and not suffer them to be dispers'd to the motion of his exteriour members.

§. 3. The next thing to be noted, in *Gregory*'s way, is what's written *Ch.* 15. that he said, the thoughts he had of God when he pray'd, now he was well advanc'd in the exercise of pray'r, were not comprehended by inward words, but another kind of way: which, what it was, either he could not express, or at least he has not. To understand this we must remember, that the other senses strike our soul and cause knowledg,

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by the means of certain Images and true similitudes of the things perceiv'd: but *Hearing*, though it, too, proceeds this way in its proper object, yet often excites knowledg by another way also; *viz.* by the names which men have impos'd on things. Whence 'tis plain, that the similitudes of the things known are not necessary in the Fancy, after the first finding out or perception of the thing: but, it suffices that there be a kind of sign or monitory in the Fancy, for the understanding to exercise a true notion and thought of it. Now, if the business be done by signs, nothing hinders but, as Fancy-made words are the signs of the several objects, so some one word or other stroak may be made the sign of an entire sentence; and so thoughts may be put into the mind no longer by distinct words, but by a kind of Short-writing, as it were: And thus, through that mighty force of exercise and practise, that *Gregory* may have arriv'd to pray by certain short hints, which he could not express to others.

§. 4. Now, we are here to note, that in *Gregory*'s most perfect pray'r (whom

I ſcruple not to prefer before the generality of thoſe who call themſelves Myſticks, and own they act with their Will only) thinking of God always intervend: And, if S. *Tereſa* ſeem to ſay otherwiſe of her pray'r, ſhe was deceiv'd by the Divines according to whoſe inſtructions ſhe explicated what ſhe experienc'd in her ſelf; and they had contracted this apprehenſion either from their not knowing the nature of the powers of the Soul, or their reading the antient Myſticks. Which, 'tis plain, happned alſo to the writer of *Gregary*'s Life; who, after his relation of that ſaying of *Gregory*'s, ſubjoyns [*Which way was no other then of ſublime affections, &c.*] Which ſeems to me directly oppoſite both to *Gregary*'s words, who expreſly ſays they were *thoughts of God:* and to the nature of pray'r, which thoſe that treat of it define to be an Act of Underſtanding, though dependent from the Will: Laſtly, 'tis againſt that generally known Axiome both of Theology and Philoſophy, that *nothing is will'd but what is known before*; which all the Graver Divines tenacioufly retain, notwithſtand-

ing the oppoſition of the Myſticks. But if *Willing* be nothing elſe but perfect and ſtrong underſtanding, as we have deduc'd; nothing can be conceiv'd more repugnant and oppoſite both to Nature and Reaſon, then this opinion.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the compoſſibility of different Acts, and the gradation of them.

§. 1. IN this freedom from Fancies I conceive that eminency of *Gregory* was rooted, that, notwithſtanding that moſt ardent act of the Love of God which he perpetually had, he could ſtudy Sciences, diſcourſe of the ſubtilleſt things, perform all natural and civil offices. For, ſince 'tis evident out of Philoſophy, that the ſoul of it ſelf is apt to comprehend all things together; the impediment to thinking

thinking or doing more things at once is from the neatness and linaiation of the body, and chiefly from the defect of the Fancy. Whence we see, that the souls of Infants are as it were ty'd to some one thing: but the prudenter they grow, the more things they consider about their action, which were they not together in the soul, the action could not proceed out of the sight of them all and their relation to one another, as yet we experience it does. So we see Women and Artificers sing, while they spin, or sow, or do some other work according to the rules of Art: We see Players on the Lute, or other Musical Instruments, hold discourse and answer questions: and, did not they go on their journey, whose *heart burnt within them* whilst Truth it self expounded to them the Scriptures? Is it not necessary for them to have the Rules of *Grammar* and *Prosodia* constantly in their eye, least they transgress? No doubt, therefore, but, together with a constant act of the love of God, *Gregory* might perform the other offices of Life.

2. But, you'l think that opposes it

which is written of him, *Ch.* 15. that he exercis'd his acts with so great efficacy every time he fetch'd his breath, that he remain'd almost always elevated in spirit, had no memory either of himself or the things of this life; and apply'd his memory, understanding and will to this exercise, in such manner, that he felt not the temptations that invaded him, till they began to abate. *B.* 1. *Ch.* 12. 'tis related that, in the morning especially, he pray'd with so great application of his mind, that he was in a manner out of himself: Also, *B.* 2. *Ch.* 14. that he had never retir'd one step back. To these we must say, that, in the Writers of Saints Lives, 'tis narrowly to be observ'd; what they relate out of the memory of the things done, and what out of their own apprehension. For, they are most commonly astonisht with the greatness of the things, and full of admiration; and, though they tell great things, yet both themselves esteem them, and would have them seem to others more wonderful then they are. For, 'tis clear, in this very case we have in hand, that *Gregory* so apply'd his Animal-

spirits

spirits to pray'r; that they remain'd still fit to perform the other parts of life prudently; and 'twas necessary for him to leave some exercises to follow others. So, he quitted his act of Resignation, to prosecute his act of Charity: so, his Meditations and other particular pray'rs, to learn the H. Scriptures, and, I believe, ev'n other Sciences too; which the H. Spirit had suggested to be necessary to him, and could not be had without study.

S. 3. The Writer of *Gregory*'s Life tells us, *B.* 1. *Ch.* 12. and otherwhere, that the H. Man exercis'd acts of divers degrees about the same object; and those very far from one another in perfection: for example, that his acts of the love of God were much excellenter after long exercise, then at the beginning. And *B.* 2. *Ch.* 15. he explicates the same thing more clearly; and says, the later acts were without violence, more simple, subtiller, and less sensible, yet perfecter. From this explication what can I imagine, but that *Gregory* then wrought by pure judgments? For, this difference there is between the Understanding purely

judging; and the Will or Understanding impell'd by the appetite: that pure understanding is exercis'd with a certain quiet, or imperceptible motion; but Wil preventing Understanding is plac'd in a strong and sensible one. *Grammar* affords us an argument hereof: for, acts of pure understanding are of the Indicative Mood; as those, *The Heavens shew forth the glory of God, and the Firmament declares the works of his hands*; and what follows in the same *Psalm*. But those, *All ye works of our Lord bless our Lord! Bless our Lord all ye Nations! Would my wayes were directed!* and the like, as being affections, are to be express'd with a more vehement spirit and motion. And, so we find, that prudent persons do their business without being perceiv'd, and silently; imprudent, with noise and stir.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

Of a certain Illumination, gain'd as it were without any industry.

§. 1. IN the 16 *Ch.* upon occasion of a question put by a very pious man, he disputes of another kind of either Pray'r or Revelation. The asker proposes it in this manner. It happens sometimes that, while the soul applies it self, in great tranquillity, with all its forces, to the love of God; on a sudden God, unexpectedly, and as it were drawing the Curtain, before interpos'd between himself and the soul, in a wonderful manner at one stroak, divests it of all affection to Creatures, and dilates and renders it capable of those things which it self is neither able to conceive nor to explicate: and while the Soul endeavours to reflect and attend to them, they suddenly vanish, leaving on-

ly affections behind. He ask'd, therefore, if *Gregory* himself retain'd any memory of this kind of favours, after they were past; or if he, perhaps, perpetually enjoy'd that state, which happens seldom to others? *Gregory* answer'd, that as it was not in the power of man to acquire such favours by his own pains; so neither to retain the memory of them; nor did he believe very long enjoyments of such like indulg'd to any of the Saints; except perhaps to the B. Virgin it may have been granted to persevere in so sublime a Vision. But, in ordinary *Union*, which he deny'd not was granted to himself, that 'twas possible both to persevere and ev'n encrease. Then he subjoyn'd a discourse concerning Extasies and Revelations; as it were insinuating that the graces they had been speaking of were of that kind.

§. 2. And, who am I, that I should pretend to put in my note amongst Masters? Yet, since I have begun, I must shew my unskilfulness. But, first of all, I do not, in the least, doubt of their veracity, who relate their own experiments, that they are sensible of a certain

tain light as it were immediately infus'd by God; *viz.* not acquir'd by their own industry; but given them unawares. Again, that this light brings into the mind a kind of illustrious splendour, and is follow'd by choice and most pleasing affections: And, that the affections indeed continue in the soul, but the light so vanishes, that there remains nothing but a certain confus'd memory of it. I agree to all this. But, whether it be so Noble a grace as the Spiritual Masters would perswade us, I am at a stand. And, that which breeds my scruple is, that methinks I experience some thing like this in Studies and Natural Speculations: as, sometimes a truth appears most evident to me, and the joy which follows the finding it out is very great; but, whilst I would examine it, it gives me the slip, nor can I find what should have been the occasion of so great clearness and evidence: Whence, I am forc'd to suspect, that 'tis nothing else but a certain serene disposition of Fancy, which, as it were by luminous colours, plays with me; without any solid intellection for its foundation.

§. 3.

353. For, since Humane Nature is, to be a mind or principle of understanding, all its perfection ought to lye in the understanding; that the Man operate with and out of Reason. And, if at any time God carries us above reason, and that (as *Aristotle* teaches) there's no deliberating; 'tis to be believ'd this happens in things whose principles are so remote, that the understanding is yet unable to penetrate and discover them. But, those things, which serve towards perfecting the soul it self, ought to be rational; and, which follows, the memory of them remain: and, if it does not, the remaining affections are corporeal, not spiritual; as is plain enough, in that they follow without motives, since there's no longer any memory of them. They are, therefore, Graces, and helps to spiritual life; but not the substance of it, *Gregory* himself being Judge; who, as soon as he had ended the above explicated answer, presently fell to the discourse concerning Extasies and Revelations; as if he thought this grace either one of them, or something analogous to them, and of the same kind:

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but, plac'd the ſubſtance of ſpiritual life in the ordinary union, or a continual act of Charity. Which very thing the whole deſign of Theology atteſts; and that thoſe who aſpire to ſuch a life are to ſtrein at this chiefly, and with all their forces: in which *Gregory* ſays, there's no limit; but one may always advance in it, and climb to a higher degree.

CHAP. X.

Of the ſuff'ring Divine things.

§. 1. THere was propos'd to the ſame *Gregory* another ſtate of extraordinary and wonderful tranquillity in the purſuers of Piety: They have a paſſive union with God, and feel a certain love participating of Fruition: Concerning which 'tis explicated at large, *Ch.* 18. that there is acting too, ev'n in that ſtate; but the paſſion or receiving from God is ſo much above

above the action, that the ſtate takes its denomination from thence: which is plac'd more in poſſeſſing what one has, then ſeeking for what is wanting. This, they ſay, is the ſtate which the *Areopagite* attributes to *Hierotheus*; and tells us, 'tis the higheſt degree of ſpiritual advance. *Gregory*'s anſwer was to this purpoſe, that he acknowledg'd this ſtate to be good, and of much perfection; but, by no means the higheſt, and top of it. He gave the reaſon, that this life was the ſtate of griefs and labours; the future, of reſt and pleaſure. Whence he argu'd, that a laborious, not a delicious, life was to be purſu'd here, and ſuff'rings were always to be ſought after: and that this he had both found by experience, and been taught by Chriſt; who profeſs'd it, both in word, that he came not into this world to do his own will, but the will of his Father that ſent him; and in Example, leading a life always in labours, and, as it were, made up of griefs, to be left for us to imitate.

§. 2. Yet, though ſo great an authority much weighs with me, I am not able, without reluctance, to ſubmit to the

the concluſion. For, we ſee Nature proceeds to the term prefixt it, by participations of the end it ſelf: in local motion, by every ſtep we become leſs diſtanc'd from the Goal propos'd: the ſick by degrees is leſs and leſs ill, that is, acquires more and more health, while he is cur'd: fire is begotten by multiplication of heat: an Animal grows big and ſtrong, by aggregating fleſh to fleſh, bone to bone, nervous ſubſtance to nerves; and ſo the reſt. Nay, the griefs of Mind and tortures of Conſcience in this world diſpoſe towards the Worm that never ſhall die, and the fire that ſhall never be quenched. Why, therefore, ſhould not ſpiritual pleaſures and delectations about God be the connatural way to the torrent of pleaſure and beatifying joy? Add, that the Merit is not rightly eſtimated from the difficulty of the work; but ought to be from the quantity of the effect. So much Charity, whether painfully or ſweetly come by, is the ſeed of ſo much glory: And this is certain from *Gregory*'s own meaning. The whole queſtion, therefore, is reduc'd to this, whether always equal

labour

labour is necessary to gain equal Charity.

§. 3. For which 'tis to be noted, that every mans body and soul has not the same disposition to wisdom and Grace; the wise man attesting, that *he had a good soul allotted him*; which the sense of the place manifests to be spoken comparatively. And we see some in their very Childhood so affected to piety, that they seem born to it; so connaturally they imbrace it when propos'd, and tenaciously retain it: when others are, by long and severe discipline, hardly wrought to it. Nor, can there be any doubt, but those with far greater pleasure pursue piety, then these: and yet, all commend them above these. Add now, that pleasure is instituted by Nature, to perfect and multiply those acts to which 'tis adjoyn'd; not to hinder action or make it be forborn. 'Tis, therefore, a fallacious discourse, there's more pleasure taken, therefore there's less merit: whereas this should have been subsum'd, therefore more both of action and merit follows. Besides, who knows not that, when one acts out of habit

too,

too, 'tis with pleasure, and as it were conformably to the stream of Nature: whereas, yet, 'tis against all Topicks to believe, that he who acts out of habit merits less, then one who with difficulty exercises the beginnings of virtue. The Fabrick, therefore, of Nature, the intent in creating pleasure, common sense and experience, convince that operation with pleasure is the better.

§. 4. These things premis'd, I dare assert that the case proposed to *Gregory* is not that of the Divine *Hierotheus*, but concerning a far inferiour state; and that the quiet of mind in *Hierotheus* proceeded from the equable disposition of his body and mind, and its facilness to apprehend and exercise divine things; Whence, causes might easily and ordinarily be met with which were capable to move him and raise him above others; and that which is said of the Poet [*Whatever I went about to write turn'd a verse*] was verified of *Hierotheus* concerning God. Yet, for all that, he no less studied and compos'd his works, then the other his *Metamorphosis*: but 'twas with that ingenuous freedome, that they seem'd to proceed

proceed immediately from God; as the other Verſes from a certain *Genius* of Nature. But, what is ſaid in the caſe, that they more enjoy then act, either is ſpoken of ſenſible ſweetneſs, or falſe. For ſpiritual Fruition is nothing elſe but love of a good as preſent. Such therefore, either reſt in Gods gifts, without referring them to that true poſſeſſion we are to gain in the future life; and ſo 'twill be ſinful: or the taſt of this ſweetneſs raiſes their appetite to the ſolid one; and then the more they reliſh this, the more they love the future, that is, are inflam'd with greater Charity. But, if they do neither of theſe, that delectation will be a corporeal motion, and far from *Hierotheus*'s, which broke out into Hymns and Spiritual Songs beyond others, and was active not ſlothful; and the acts of it ſuch as *Gregory*'s, expreſſing his prayer by thoſe words, *All ye works of our Lord bleſs our Lord, &c.*

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

To and for whom Gregory *pray'd.*

§. 1. HEre naturally falls in that Inquiry, What kind of *pray'r this holy man us'd?* which divides it self into three questions; *To whom*, *for whom*, and, *in what form* he pray'd. As for the first, we read not expresly that he ever directed his prayer immediately to the B. Virgin, or any of the Saints: and perhaps it besitted not him, who treated familiarly with Christ as his immediate Master, to send Mediators to him. Yet, he recommended to others the patronage of the Saints, and enjoyn'd saying of the *Rosary*, according to the quality of every ones disposition. Nay, certainly, himself, at his beginning, us'd the mediation of the Saints: for, *Ch.* 1. 'tis written, that he spent many daies and nights in pray'r at our Ladies of *Guadalupe*, and had re-

ceiv'd a Command from her to go to *New Spain*; and, *Ch.* 13. that he us'd the intercession of S. *John* Baptist, and rejoyc'd that his *Viaticum* was brought him on his day. He congratulated also to himself, that the Sacrament of *Extreme Unction* was administer'd to him on S. *Peter* and *Pauls* day: whence, it seems doubtful in what manner he exercis'd his devotion towards the Saints, as for himself.

The next is *for whom* he pray'd; which head comprehends both persons and things. And, as for persons, there's found no special exception, but that he supplicated God for whomsoever recommended themselves to him. Besides, for those who were in greater necessity; as, for Hereticks and Sinners. Yet, I observe two things specially remarkable about this. The first is, that *B.* 2. *Ch.* 12. he avowd he could not rest, while he saw his Brethren in danger; nor would ever give over one day, as long as he knew any one of them continu'd in a dangerous condition. The other is, *Ch.* 16. where 'tis written that his exercise was to pray for the whole Church; which he attests to be a great per-

perfection and vouchsaft to few; *viz.* that by the special Will of God this should be the office of such persons; otherwise 'tis common, and commanded to all that recite the *Lords Pray'r*. 'Tis not, therefore, in it self, great perfection, but argues great perfection in the subject; *viz.* that he has in some sort way'd the care of his own salvation, as in a manner secur'd, above the danger of temptations and ev'n venial slips for the most part, which imperfecter persons are bound to watch against: The reason of this I say will appear more at large out of what follows, and the Rules what we are to ask for our Neighbours.

§. 3. And, that we may not be at a stand, or mistake, 'tis express'd, *Ch.* 17. to this purpose. The whole care he had, in his pray'r for his Neighbour, was this, that the Will of God might be done in him on earth, in the same manner as 'tis done in Heav'n. The meaning of these words seems to me ambiguous: for, they may be taken either in this sense, that whatever is determin'd concerning our Neighbour, in the Divine Providence and efficacious

Will of God, may be perfectly put in execution on earth; or, that this man may perform the Will of God, that is, his commands, with that plenitude of affection on earth, as the Angels and Saints fulfill them in Heav'n. The first interpretation seems to relish more of the love of God; the later, more of Charity to our Neighbour: both agree in this, that he ask'd nothing in special for his Neighbour, but, either salvation in common, or not so much as that, but only what God, all things consider'd, judg'd best for that person. Nor is there any doubt, out of what has been determin'd above, but this last sense has more perfection in it self, because 'tis an extension of the general to particulars; a virtual kind of discourse, by which under this antecedent desire that Gods will be done in common, I subsume and wish that his will be done in this particular; which, with submission still to him, I take to be his will; and so extend and encrease my Charity. But, what suited best to *Gregory*'s own disposition is uncertain, and to be otherways collected.

§. 4. And, we read, *Ch.* 8. that, to questions

queſtions put him about temporal buſineſſes, he willingly made no other anſwer, but that he would commend ſuch a buſineſs to God: but, if any one conſulted with him about amendment of life, or (that appear'd fit for it) about taking Orders, or entring into Religion; he preſently endeavour'd to promote the matter, by taking off the difficulties. Again, *Ch.* 15. that he obſerv'd equality of Charity to himſelf and his Neighbour; and neither preferr'd himſelf before any other in good works, nor more deſir'd to obtain mercy for himſelf then for any other. It ſeems, on the matter, clear that God gave *Gregory* not an abſolute indifference concerning his Neighbour; but temper'd with an inclination to ſpiritual goods. Whence, the ſenſe of his pray'r is concluded to have been, that the affections of thoſe, whom he pray'd for, might be perfect towards God. But, what is to be thought of his equality of Charity to himſelf and his Neighbour; and that he equally deſir'd mercy might be granted to his Neighbour as himſelf? Firſt, 'tis plain, we are to deſire as much good to

our Neighbour as to our selves; though we more desire those equal goods for our selves then for our Neighbours: and this is both a good and clear explication. Again, this equality may be understood in respect of exteriour goods, in which it appears to others whether we prefer our selves before our Neighbour; and he by his equality shew'd his perfect poverty: which the Writer of his Life, who sees not the inmost soul, justly calls and apprehends equality of Charity.

CHAP. XII.

Of his Pray'r for the Church, and for a certain Noble Woman.

§. 1. REturning then to the question propos'd, 'tis manifest, that the Office of praying to God for the Church, or Universe, abstracts the mind of him that prays from all particulars,

culars, nor only Kindred and Benefactors, but ev'n his own ſoul; and, as far as Nature can bear, aſſimilates him to God, who principally regards Univerſals without the byaſs of inclination to any particular. What then? Did not *Gregory* pray for particular affairs, eſpecially ſpiritual ones? Yes ſurely; for this is very often recounted of him. But, that is to be obſerv'd which we read, *Ch.* 17. that, as often as he was to ſpeak, anſwer, or ask any thing, firſt elevating his mind to God, he beſought the grace of ſpeaking well; after the example of *Nehemiah*, as he ſaid. Whence, 'tis very credible, that he never interpos'd to God for a particular buſineſs, unleſs he had firſt inwardly receiv'd an anſwer, that that would be acceptable to God: as, 'tis plain, the Bleſſed do in Heav'n; and *Gregory* himſelf, from the anſwer made to *S. Catherine of Siena*, how Chriſt entreated her to pray for ſinners, ſeems to inſinuate. What then? Does God need the interceſſion of the Saints to pour out his mercy? Not at all: but the Saints need this commiſeration of ſinners, to make them become more Saints. I

ſpeak here of the living: for, the Bleſſed, neither as to Pray'r, nor as to Sanctity, are capable of change or encreaſe.

§. 2. But, that muſt not be paſſed over in ſilence which is read of *Gregory*'s Pray'r, *Ch.* 12. which alſo we took notice of above, under theſe words, *that he could not reſt, &c.* For, though theſe words do not fully expreſs, yet, by the Context, the Author of his Life ſeems to have underſtood a certain trouble and pain, which this Holy Man inceſſantly underwent for his Neighbour: which that wonderful Hiſtory, deſcrib'd *B.* 1. *Ch.* 13. confirms; of a Noble Woman near her end converted to God, and beſeeching *Gregory* to aſſiſt her at her Death, and ſhew her the way to Heav'n: which he before Witneſs ſolemnly promis'd her. The Author relates that, within a few daies, the Penitent Lady took her bed, of her laſt ſickneſs; and, the nearer ſhe drew to her end, the more ſtill *Gregory*'s inward pains encreas'd, till, at the hour of her Death, he ſeem'd in an Extaſie: and that, hearing ſhe was dead, he anſwer'd with demonſtration of joy, *God is powerful.* This, firſt, in this relation is certain,

certain, that 'tis *true*; since 'tis written by a sincere person, and one not so much an eye-witness, as party in the business: whence, there cannot be any suspition either of error or falsifying. The next is, that *Gregory*, not without consulting with God, and as it were a previous compact with him, both promis'd and fulfill'd his promise.

§. 3. The Author of the History, following the vulgar apprehension, seems to interpret it thus; that *Gregory* took on himself her Expiatory-pains in *Purgatory*; and satisfi'd the Divine Justice, except that little which remain'd for her self to pay in the interval between her death and his: Mean while, that he was present with her at her death, and accompany'd her into *Purgatory*; whence he was to carry her to heav'n, when, dying, himself should go thither. Our Theology neither allows Spirits these corporeal motions, nor any such satisfaction by proxy; (which is a kind of extrinsecal imputation of Merits) but only deprecation: Thus, therefore, I understand the matter really pass'd. God would in the last Act, as it were, shut up the Play

of

of his eminent servants life, with a vast encrease of his Sanctity; as became Providence. Wherefore, he offer'd him this occasion of the Penitent Lady. Being ask'd what was to be done, God answer'd him, he would do any thing that he should require, if he would take on him the congruous means. *Gregory* assented, and, in this confidence, answer'd the Woman according to her desire, and bound it by promise. Now 'tis out of question, that in the course of Gods Providence the prayer of Saintly persons is laid for congruous means to divers effects, and, especially spiritual ones; not as if they were to alter God, but as if God had inalterably, from all Eternity, laid such ends to be compast by such means; with which Decree of his, *Gregory*'s perfect resignation made him as effectually ready to comply, as it would do others if they thought their prayer would work a change in Gods determination, and so in the futurition of the thing. 'Tis likely also, that *Gregory*'s both knowledge of her imperfections, and his particular insight into the Order of Supernatural Providence, made him judge, that

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no degree of fervency less than such a one as approacht, even to an Agony, was a competent means to such an effect. This therefore was the pain he underwent, which at the womans point of death was so great, that he was out of himself. But let's see how this wrought upon her, to fit her for heaven. *Gregory* had assented to her Petition, that is, had in himself resolv'd upon that Agony of Prayer, for so we may call it, since it broke out more than any thing else ever did in *Gregory* into outward effects; and such it was to be, that it might be taken notice of, and so work upon her: Nor is it to be doubted, but (there being daily intercourse of Messengers) she heard related, during her sickness, the still encreasing pains of *Gregory*, and particularly that saying, when being ask't if he remembred her, he answer'd with a groan, *I feel her lye heavy upon me*: Which passages joyn'd to her apprehension of *Gregory*'s extraordinary Sanctity, and that God would deny nothing to the prayers and sufferings of so holy a man, nor he promise what he knew not from God he should perform; as on the one side it bred exceeding

ceeding repentance for, and abhorring of her ſins, that caus'd ſuch pangs to ſo charitable and true a Friend of hers, and even ſo dearly beloved a Friend of Gods; ſo it exceedingly heightned her Hope and Confidence in Gods mercy, that what the Saint had ingag'd for ſhould effectually be accompliſht. Since then Hope is the propereſt diſpoſition to Charity, every one loving that perſon beſt in whom he places moſt confidence, that he will certainly do him greateſt goods; 'tis evident, that a confidence rais'd to this pitch by ſuch motives, would flame out into a moſt ardent act of Charity, eaſily burning out all affections to paſt pleaſures, already made fit fuel for that pureſt fire, and even half conſum'd already by the ſorrow of repentance; which done, ſhe thus diſpos'd aſcended immediately to the Beatifical Viſion. Thus I conceive it paſt literally, and not (as the Relator ſurmis'd) that ſhe turn'd aſide into Purgatory, to expect his coming to deliver her. For, in his whole life 'tis not written, that either himſelf deliver'd, or ſaw deliver'd, any Soul: Beſides, thoſe local motions of ſouls are incongruous; as is plain out of Theology. CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

Of three kinds of Prayr, us'd by Gregory.

§. 1. IT remains that we discourse a little of the Pray'r it self he us'd, and what he said while he was in pray'r. His prayer was either Mental or Vocal. I find five Mental ones: two uninterrupted; two intermitted; one once us'd, but which is an exemplar of many. The first of his continu'd prayers was this; *Thy will be done in Earth as 'tis in Heav'n; Amen, Jesu.* Which that he us'd, at least at the beginning, without any farther consideration then of the sense formally answering the words, is probable from his so constant iteration, that it accompany'd every fetching of his breath; and this with a strong *effort*, so that before he was practis'd in it, the desire must of necessity have drawn its rise from the bottom of his heart, and prest all the forces

forces of his mind into attention and earneſt wiſhing: the form whereof is ſhewn in thoſe words, *Amen, Jeſu*; which are as much as *Be it ſo, be it ſo, I beſeech thee, O Jeſu!* This pray'r he exercis'd three years together; and declar'd that, after the firſt year, this exerciſe was grown ſo habitual, that he needed no longer take notice of his breathing; for, the acts themſelves, with all poſſible fervour, follow'd his reſpirations, as it were naturally. Whence, 'tis plain, that during thoſe ſpaces of time he might well think of the motives of his deſire, and therefore render his act more perfect and ſpiritual.

§. 2. After three years, another pray'r ſucceeded this; *viz.* an exerciſe of loving God with his whole force, and his Neighbour as himſelf. Since the very words of the precept require the whole mind, the whole ſoul, and all the forces; no doubt but the Saint us'd his utmoſt effort to perform this, and did perform it: So that, within a very few years, himſelf atteſts it ſeem'd difficult to him for one moment to forget his exerciſe. How he at firſt expreſs'd this

this prayer, there's nothing declar'd: but, when *R. Iosa* ask'd him, he said, that he us'd these or the like speeches, *Praise our Lord all ye Nations, praise him all ye People: Bless our Lord all ye his Works, praise and extol him for ever. May all the Earth adore thee and bless thy Name.* Which may be understood two ways: One, to be exhortations to the Creatures, especially rational ones, with heart and mouth to bless our Lord: Another, to this sense, as if he exprest that rational and irrational things, by their works, do make known that they are created and order'd by God well and commodiously, and to the greatest good and absolutely *Best* that can be had in Creatures: Which is, to attest that God is most wise and good: which, again, is to proclaim most perfectly the praises of God.

§. 3. This Third, and of Intermissive pray'rs the first, seems to belong to this very same kind, and to be a particular one comprehended under the universal: and it consisted herein, that he refer'd to God all things that belong'd to him, as 'tis describ'd, *B. 2. Ch. 17.* If he strove against temptation, if he overcame,

came, if he receiv'd any favour from God, he presently turn'd himself to God, acknowledging the whole from him, and devoting all to his service. And, to recommend this manner of praying to others, he recounted that saying of the wise man, that *there are many men of mercy, but a faithful who shall find?* signifying, that there are few who, out of self-love and pride, do not please themselves in those things which should be acknowledg'd from God alone, and for which praise and thanks should be given to him only. And, that this prayer was a part of his act of Charity seems manifest, in that the same *Gregory*, *Ch.* 16. answer'd, that if he knew he should die within a few hours, he would do nothing but what he did; *Because* (said he) *I really give to God whatever I have; nor can I give him more, unless he in his mercy give me more to give him.* *Gregory's* act of Charity, therefore, consisted in this, *viz.* labouring with all his might to set his mind in a perfect readiness to do whatever God should suggest to him to be done; which is clearly the degree of highest activity.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

Of his fourth and fifth kinds of Mental Pray'r, and of Vocal Pray'r.

§. 1. HIs fourth kind of Pray'r, the Author of his life declares, was so exercis'd, that, on occasion given, he elevated his mind to God by way of Praise, or of Petition. Nor does this contradict our Character of a Mystick; for though Praise and Petition be not his peculiar exercise precisely as a Mystick, yet having other qualifications too, he may practise other exercises. Examples of this way he gives, *Ch.* 17. how, hearing that a King kept his Subjects in peace, elevating his mind to God, he begg'd that all the world may obey God. If they were speaking of a Father belov'd of his Children, he presently begg'd that God might be beloved of his Creatures. If

a Gardner was mention'd, by his diligence making his flowers and fruits thrive; he petition'd the same from God for his Creatures. But, if the mischiefs of War or any other were spoken of, he, as it were, expostulated with God, that his Sons, and his own Brethren should be permitted to go to ruine. In this pray'r we may note: First, that the pray'r is two-fold; one rising naturally out of the matter it self, as in the last example, where the very matter gives the occasion of praying; but in the other examples, the pray'r is not about the thing it self, but as it were metaphorically transfer'd to another thing. Now, 'tis plain, that which is about the thing it self is the better; being it less diverts the soul from the present objects 'tis to attend to, through the state 'tis in; as also, because it yields a greater occasion of stirring the appetite. The other thing to be noted is, that this manner of prayer be so exercis'd, that it divert not the mind from the business it ought to be intent on; else it would be faulty.

§. 2. Of his special pray'r I find only one example, *Ch.* 12. in which 'tis related

ted that, overcome with the importunity of *F. Losa*, at last he broke out into these words, expressing the inward pain he felt; *Thou knowst, O Lord, that for thy love I suffer not any created thing to take any place in my heart. Why, therefore, dost thou hide thy self so far from me? Canst thou permit that a worm of the earth should suffer so many ills, and, being able to heal him, dost not? How is it possible thou wilt have me seek the herbs of the earth, which thou hast created for the beasts food, when thou canst with a* Fiat, *yet hast not the will to cure me?* The Author subjoyns *Gregory* said these words, partly to ease his pain, and partly to discover to *Losa* himself, for his edification, what pass'd in his soul. But, could this pray't proceed from a man perfectly resign'd to the will of God? Again, what is it, that he should as it were alledge his own merit, in saying that he admitted not any created thing into his heart? which seems not the part of a *faithful* man (as he term'd him,) who attributed and return'd all the good he had or did to God. Lastly, if he spoke thus to ease his pain, did he not give Nature part with the inter-

our mans against his own proposal and Doctrine commended to *F. Losa*? Besides, there's no mention of remitting himself to Gods will: But truly his act it self did this; and the thing perform'd what the Voice expres'd not.

§. 3. For Vocal Pray'r, that contains both the pronouncing of certain Forms, and receiving the Sacraments. As to the first, 'tis related, that *Gregory* was delighted with our *Lords Pray'r*, and accustomed to annex to the several Petitions *In earth as 'tis in heav'n*, *Amen*, *Jesu!* I suppose 'tis spoken of the three first Petitions; for this addition suits not to the rest: for, *in heav'n*, neither *daily bread*, nor *remission of debts*, nor *avoiding of temptations*, nor *deliverance from evils*, have properly any place. As to his use of the Sacraments, there's mention made of the Eucharist; as well of his receiving it corporeally, as meerly spiritually: and that indeed he frequented it most devoutly and most decently; how often is not intimated: but 'tis to be believ'd he, by spiritual communicating, supply'd the defect of it; as also of going to *Mass*, which, 'tis written, *Ch.* 6. he commonly heard only

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lyon Holydaies and Sundaies. In general, too, we are told he perform'd all the *Rites* of the Church with great devotion and care: I mean *Proceßions* (which we are either commanded, or at leaſt admoniſht to be at) receiving of *Pſalms*, *Aſhes*, and the like; which, as the year paſſes over, ev'n the Laity, as it were of right, have a ſhare in.

§. 4. He ſeems to have conſtituted a double ſpiritual Eating of the Euchariſt. One in Vote or Affection, by exerciſing in the heart a great deſire of real Eating; *viz.* when it was not convenient, for publick or private cauſes, to communicate really: otherwiſe, it had been to no purpoſe to deſire what, when he might, he would not have; nor were that a vehement deſire which would not overcome moderate difficulties. Certainly he found a great Exilement to Devotion in communicating, elſe what ſo great a man ſhould deſire in real Eating, 'tis hard to judge. The other ſpiritual Eating conſiſted (both are deſcribed *B. 2. Ch. 17.*) in an ardent deſire of receiving into his ſoul the moſt H. Trinity, by giving Chriſt effectively and really, that is,

with a full affection and efficacious will, a Station, and, as it were, Mansion in his heart. Which operation seems to me wholly Metaphorical, and not favouring of that eminent Theology which he that writ this perswaded himself was in *Gregory*, unless perhaps he spake thus for others use, not his own. For, who is ignorant that, where Christ is corporally, the three persons are there also; or that, in the heart of a just person, they are never absent, especially whilst he is about some holy work.

§. 5. Something like this he said of the H. Sacrifice of the Mass, *viz.* that there is a certain spiritual Sacrifice, by which Christs Life, Passion, and Death are offer'd to God the Father, either for the World and Church universally, or for particular persons: and the writer of his Life, in the same place, says that he much confided in and rely'd on this Spiritual Sacrifice, and accounted it of great importance: But, unless my Theology fails me, he taught this out of his own discourse, not any special admonition of God. For, in as much as this commemoration of Christs me-

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rits renders pray'r fervent and confident, so far without doubt 'tis most efficacious: but, that it should make any true notion of a sacrifice, more then as we call the *Sacrifice of Praise*, I see subject to great difficulties. For, we should be said to Sacrifice S. *Peter* and S. *Paul*, and whatever others whose suff'rings and Merits we represent to God, as well as our Lord Christ: and, where there's no outward ceremony, there's no notion of a Sacrifice. Of the Sacrament of *Penance* I find no special mention, but at his very death: concerning which the Author writes how, being at the point of it, he askt, or rather adjur'd him, to confess at least some one venial sin, though committed many years before; which being absolv'd, (in virtue of the Bull, call'd the *Cruzada*) he might give him great Indulgences. *Gregory* deny'd himself conscious of any crime: and the Author labours to excuse this answer; alledging that he signifi'd not hereby that he was without sin, but that, at his sudden asking him, nothing came to his mind. But, I remember, in another Edition of the Saints Life, I have read that he said,

Just persons may live a long time without venial sin: and that negligence, not to remember sin, seems not possibly consistent with that light which *Gregory* enjoy'd. Mean while, it seems hence evident, that for many years he had not frequented the Sacrament of Penance.

OF

OF PRAYER.

Third Book.

Of the Practise of Christian Life.

CHAP. I.

Division of Christian Life in common; and of its first Branch, or Pray'r.

§. 1. TO what purpose serves my knowing whither I am to go, unless I learn as well which way I am to take?

ease. For, to know what I want affects my mind, unless the hope of obtaining relieve it. This is conceiv'd by falling into the way, is strengthen'd by going forward, is ripen'd into the thing it self and enjoyment by reaching the end of it. The way of life, therefore, we must seek for. And, because life it self is not plac'd out of man, the way, too, must be sought in man himself: For, it is nothing else but that culture, whereby man grows a living soul. Man then being the result of body and soul united, he requires the culture of both natures, and divides the Treatise of him into two. But, that part which is the simpler and end of the other challenges the first place. 'Tis, therefore, immediately prescrib'd me to discuss by what steps man is carry'd directly to Beatitude; *viz.* by what thoughts and affections, as it were by Scaling Ladders, he offers violence to Heaven. Nor are we now to stand upon proving, that *Charity* is that great Road: That has been done already: But, what Track we must keep to render that perfectest, this is our work. Nor, again, can it be doubted but Charity feeds it self stronger

ger with its own acts: for Nature tells us this: but our purpose is to render these the most and most vigorous that may be. To which the Nature of Charity (the stalk, as it were, of our Spirit) introduces us advising, that the less forces are spent on other things, the more are left for Charity. This, therefore, remains fixt, that we are to endeavour, that all the Nerves and strength we have may be wholly employed on the love of God, and none but on other things.

§. 2. That the soul may go forth into such an act, she is to be prepar'd by Consideration, and prest on by Execution. Consideration is either Natural or Artificial. Natural is, when, upon serious thinking on the Last end and Humane Nature, or upon any other obvious occasion, the understanding falls on the enquiry what is actually necessary for it to attain Beatitude: whether the consideration be universal, or particular, concerning any one part of such work. Artificial is, when he that pursues it deliberately, and by design, prescribes to himself certain hours, and matter, and rules for consideration.

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This last, by modern customs, is more usually call'd Pray'r; though the former be call'd so too, and has really the notion of pray'r more perfectly in it. Moreover, there's a third exercise express'd by the term of *pray'r*; which is a special part of these, and, in the division, uses to be call'd *Petition*: which was to be noted, least it might disturb the Reader; since it belongs not properly to this place. Rules for natural pray'r no use to be deliver'd down; it being thought immediately infus'd by God: yet, in reality, it follows of its own accord in the man; little cooperating otherwise then by proposing, out of the collection of his extrinsecal and intrinsecal dispositions. Towards helping it man may do something: but that belongs to the execution not nature of it; and will be consider'd there.

§. 3. The fruit and design of artificial pray'r is, to frame the mind to Christian and pious life; and to confirm, and render it prompt and constant. Whence, according to the three degrees of humane understanding, it ought to be threefold. For, the ablest men require Demonstration; the middle

dle ſort, weighty perſwaſion from likelihoods: the loweſt ſatisfie themſelves with certain common (rather notions and apprehenſions then) proofs; advancing themſelves by ſimple Faith and Metaphors; reſting ſomething upon underſtanding, but, as to the ſubſtance, more on affection then judgment. So, therefore, we muſt allow three *Species* of pray'r. The firſt, which renders man, of its own nature, abſolutely and perfectly immutable; though, through the imbecillity of the ſubject, by negligence and oblivion he remains obnoxious to defect. The ſecond, too, makes him hardly changeable, out of the nature of the pray'r: for, he that has conſider'd many things has overſlipt few (and ſuch as ſeldome happen) by which the reſolution he has made may be chang'd. The third has ſcarce any firm principle of action; and all his conſtancy is, becauſe he gives not himſelf the liberty to weigh ingenuouſly the truth: yet, becauſe he has the inclination of nature and the opinion of mankind on his ſide, he gets a kind of ſtability on an extrinſecal account; but, ſuch a one as is eaſily overcomable.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of the third kind of Pray'r.

§. 1. 'Tis evident from the explication we have given, that this last manner of pray'r is the weakest, and proper for weak ones: yet, in practice 'tis highly esteem'd and prefer'd before the rest. The reason whereof, *a priori*, is because most do not distinguish the motions of the will from those of the sensitive appetite; or rather, the motions of the will subject to sensitive impulse, from its motions governing the appetite: and therefore, impetuous affections, if about spiritual objects, they think to be motions of the perfect will. To this is added, that these motions and this manner of pray'r has effects, not only visible, but ev'n wonderful, and sometimes miraculous. Nevertheless, this manner of pray'r is not comparable to the former: because they, from an intrinsecal ground, are per-

perfecter; as having more of reason, that is, of nature and the governing and Architectonical power. For, Faith being joyn'd with ignorance, is a kind of obedience, and ordain'd to be govern'd by him that has Science. Whence, the chief and most necessary virtue, of those that use this kind of prayer, is humility, and a readiness to be corrected: which if they have not, they easily degenerate into errours and a debaucht life, through pride which they conceive of their own Sanctity; believing whatever hits their own temerarious fancy is deriv'd from the H. Ghost.

§. 2. But, if they be humble, they may indeed possibly be deceiv'd and deceive others; yet 'twill be innocently as to themselves: for, as often as they are try'd at the touchstone of true Theology, they are ready to quit whatever holds not colour. Now, this manner of praying is, to have the contemplation expos'd only by way of bait for the appetite to seize on. As, in the *Lives of the Fathers* 'tis related, that the Devil appear'd loaden with pots of all sorts of Drugs; and being askt why he carried so many: he answer'd, be-

because one and the same does not please every palate. So, these do not so much consider, as represent to the sensitive appetite many objects; to try, as it were, which of them will be proper to excite the fancy and move the appetite: which having found, they let the appetite take its swing; not seeking for any other fruit of pray'r, at least principally, then the sweetness of it.

CHAP. III.

Of certain Symptoms of the third kind of Pray'r.

§. 1. Consequently it must be said, that there follow this manner of pray'r certain miraculous Apparitions, Revelations, Visions, and ev'n Effects, both in the body of those that pray, and in others either bodies or spirits. For, since this is the nature of the Divine Goodness, to effund on every person whatever Graces he is immediately capable of; and those who pray

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in this manner have, by force of this pray'r, their ſouls bent to ſuperiour things, in a certain extatical degree; that is, not converted to their ſenſes and exteriour objects ſtriking them, but turn'd wholly inward: 'tis plain, they are in that diſpoſition and preparation of mind, which nature bears, for receiving emanations from ſeparated ſpirits, or from God by their means. They muſt needs therefore ſometimes, that is, as often as this diſpoſition is perfect in thoſe that pray, be indulg'd the communication of abſtracted ſpirits.

§. 2. By conſequence, on the other ſide, if through this very kind of prayer a ſoul be made extatical, that's obnoxious to any vice, *viz.* pride, vanity, or other ſuch like; it cannot fail of the communication of unclean ſpirits, that will carry it on by little and little to a wicked life and perdition. By the ſame reaſon, ſuch as are half beſide themſelves with melancholy or any other noxious humour, will be infeſted with the temptations and apparitions of evil ſpirits. Now, whether the effects of theſe kind of perſons are to be

attributed to Angels, or the exceſſes of Nature, can no otherwiſe be determin'd then from their quality. For, ſince we are not treating of other things, then ſuch as ſucceed, in a manner, connaturally from the diſpoſition of the man himſelf, as conjoynable with incorporeal ſpirits: and that diſpoſition includes that quality of the humours which has a power to wonderful effects (as they diſpute, who treat of Melancholy and hyſterical diſeaſes:) it cannot be decided from what power they proceed, otherwiſe then by thoſe qualities of the effects which clearly exceed the power of body. Such as are, that the body ſhould be ſuſtain'd aloft, that it ſhould ſhine notoriouſly in the dark, that it ſhould appear at the ſame time in many and diſtant places, that it ſhould paſs through ſolid bodies, that it ſhould diſappear on a ſudden, and the like; which manifeſtly tranſcend the nature of Body. Unleſs, therefore, ſomewhat of theſe or the like ſhew it ſelf clear in the things done, there's no reaſon to attribute them to the power of abſtracted ſpirits.

§. 3. Now, ſo much as there is of Nature

Nature in them, so much is defective: for, nature is then perfect, when 'tis steddily govern'd according to the Laws of Reason; in which consists the perfection of Christian Life. But, that some are of themselves hurry'd into Extasies, happens through some infirmity of brain. Nor hinders it, that these things befall in and by pray'r: for, 'tis always out of some debility of Nature, if it has its rise from Nature. Perfect Extasies, therefore, are those which happen purely from God, for the good of the Church: such as were those of S. *Peter* and S. *Paul*. But, that God in other Extasies, too, interposes above the power of Nature, 'tis to be ascrib'd to that goodness and providence, by which he uses to raise good out of imperfection.

CHAP. IV.

Of Communication with ſeparated Spirits.

5. 1. YOu'l object, that Communication with H. Spirits is the higheſt pitch of Humane, and conſequently, Chriſtian perfection: by the conſent of Philoſophy, Sacred Scripture, and the Opinion moſt-in-vogue of the Church. I, therefore, diſtinguiſh a double conjunction or communion with ſpirits: One ordinate, and as it were woaven into Nature out of it ſelf: Another, in a manner, accidental, ſupervening out of the neceſſity and contingency, or the imbecillity of nature. The former is apt to be exercis'd in two caſes: in private perſons, only through their conformity to ſuperiour Natures; which chiefly conſiſts in cleanneſs of heart, whereby it comes to paſs that the adminiſtration of bodies by Angels has its due effect in ſuch minds, illuminating

nating them, that is, making them see illustrious truths, both in speculative and practical matters, by the force of reason compounding and most clearly seeing through causes and effects. But, in those who are incharg'd with the administration of the Church, as oft as any knot occurs too hard for humane reason to extricate, and so there's no room for true illumination; then Angelical Providence so mingles the lots, that is, second causes, that what is best for the Church should, beyond their design or expectation, be insinuated into the Councils of the Rulers. This Communion, therefore, with abstracted Spirits is that to which humane nature can and ought aspire, to perfect it self. The other Communion is, that one should in expres words, as it were, be taught by abstracted spirits: and this is so not against Christian Discipline, that 'tis neither desirable, nor absolutely any perfection of it; nor necessary, unless through an imperfect disposition of the Soul. For, God has not subjected humane understanding to Angelical, but bodies: nor has prescrib'd us other then to walk according to Rea-

ſon, which is our Nature; or that we ſhould not be led away by paſſion or any temporal end: all which he has left in our power. He has indeed committed corporeal things, both extrinſecal and intrinſecal, to the charge of ſeparated ſubſtances; if at any time it be needful to invert their ſet order.

§. 2. Revelations, therefore, what do they immediately impart? but a certain diſpoſing of contingent things, which belongs to the Divine Providence, not the perfection of him that governs them, that they be govern'd right or amiſs: and therefore, no farther care ought to be had of them, then that they be perform'd out of a pure intention and diligently. Wherefore, as 'tis imperfection to deſire what imports not the deſirer; ſo too, unleſs when 'tis convenient for the Church, no ſuch thing is given but in condeſcendence to the imperfection of the deſirer. Since, therefore, Revelation and Doctrine is the end of the other mutations that happen extraordinarily; as Viſions, Extaſies, *&c.* they'l be all reduc'd to the ſame rule. Add that, when a Revelation without Illuminati-

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on is communicated to any other by the person to whom 'twas first made, it can never be clear from doubt to that other. 'Tis very remarkable in this matter what *Hierom Gratianus* (*S. Teresa*'s Confessor, for ten years) writes; that himself proceeded, in a certain business, contrary to a Revelation which the H. Virgin had profes'd very clear: afterwards, doubtful of what he had done, he, by her very self, consulted Christ about it; and the Virgin receiv'd answer that she did right in obeying her Confessor, and that Christ would make the business succeed better, though with greater difficulty, then if they had proceeded according to the Revelation: and that he gave this reason, too, why the H. Virgin had done well, because *in that way there could be no missing.*

§. 3. Now, I am at a stand, how, if the Revelation was clear, it could be better she should obey her Confessor. Can there be any doubt but, where the judgments of God and man are different, God is rather to be obey'd then Man; as all the Apostles with one voice confess? Nor does he satisfie me, that

answers, 'twas not a Command of Christ, but a desire only or declaration what was to be done. For, who can doubt but that is best to be done, which Christ judges is to be done? and, if that be best, then, another less good (especially, in that Virgin, who had vow'd she would do that which should seem best) would have the notion of it. Notwithstanding, it might be said, that it was the best before her Confessor had chosen; but, after his judgment, it became the less good. But, be this how it will, Christ justify'd the Saint on another account; asserting, that in that way, *viz.* of obedience, there could be no missing: which he attributed not to the force of obedience; for, he that obeys an inferiour against a Superiour, errs in the way of obedience: and this was the case in hand. This reason seems, therefore, incapable of reaching its purpose, otherwise then by taking it thus; that 'tis perfectly manifest Superiours are to be obey'd: but, whether God is obey'd *here* depends on the evidence of the Revelation; which might deceive, and therefore is not to be follow'd against

gainſt an evidence on the other ſide. That, therefore, the Revelation is ſaid to have been clear ſpeaks as much, as if it had been ſaid to be plain, or expreſs, or clear, as to the object; but not clear, as to the Revealer, ſo, as that it could not be ſuggeſted by her own ſpirit. And whence ſuch kind of clearneſs is diſcern'd but from the events, I remember not to have read any where concerning her, or any other, though profeſſing great evidence.

CHAP. V.

Of Theological Science communicated by Revelation.

§. 1. I See Doctrinal Revelations may be objected againſt this; being ſuch as may manifeſt themſelves, either by the manner of their reception (as if, in one Viſion, the Latin Tongue, or skill in Muſick, or the Art of making Verſes, ſhould be learnt; all which are recorded to have been indulg'd to ſome) or of their quality; as if ſome pro-

profound Learning, (for example, an Exposition of some place of H. Scripture formerly not understood, or of some Mystery of our Faith which Divines knew not) should be communicated; or some such like as were of that Nature, that 'twere clear 'twas not possible to be apprehended by humane study, at least in so very short a time. Remarkable is the testimony of S. *Hildegardis* concerning such an instance, in an Epistle to S. *Bernard*: *I know* (says she) *in the Text a more inward understanding of the exposition of the Psalter and Gospel, and other Volumes shewn me in this Vision; which touches my heart, and burns my soul like a flame, teaching me these profound Mysteries of the exposition.* But, if the Revelations be such, that they comprehend some entire Art or Science, and suddenly infuse them; they carry their effect with them, and are attested by that: and I believe them indisputably miraculous, and that this only is questionable, whether the relation of it be worthy of credit.

§. 2. But, those that are commonly reported as infus'd knowledges in matter of Sciences, are sometimes light and un-

unworthy of Divines, sometimes mixt with falsities; which argue they took not their rise from true supernatural illumination: but, at best, are such as an elevated wit and clean heart might attain to. Look into the writings of the two SS. *Catherines* of *Siena* and *Genoua*, of S. *Gertrude*, S. *Teresa*, and others. What footstep remains of that clear knowledge S. *Teresa* is reported to have had of the Mystery of the most H. Trinity? What have the *Carmelites* learnt from thence, to teach the other Masters of the Church? S. *Ignatius*'s Treatise on the same Subject, that *Society* prudently chuse rather to praise in common, then hazard to the Censure of Divines. These Saints seem to have had certain delightful semblances, or even to have penetrated something which might seem to themselves or their Confessors of a pitch above vulgar capacity; but which great Divines found neither strange nor new.

§. 3. Lastly, the testimony of S. *Hildegardis* neither explicates any thing in particular, whence we may guess how elevated that Science was whereof she speaks; nor at all savours of extraordinary

dinary Theology. For, what ſignifies a *more inward underſtanding*, but a kind of undetermin'd thing, and common to the three Myſtical Senſes? which they, who rightly underſtand, know are founded on the literal: which, ſhe, not profeſſing, by conſequence, muſt have meant, by *a more inward underſtanding*, a certain application of the ſeveral ſentences to the matter of ſome Myſtical interpretation, without penetrating the connexion of one ſentence with the reſt; which is neceſſary to be truly call'd underſtanding of the Scriptures. And, ſuch interpretations as theſe we ſee many; ſpecially of S. *Bernard*; of whom there's the ſame thing commemorated, as this Virgin reports of her ſelf. And, they are rather pious diſcourſes, fram'd in an alluſive way concerning the ſeveral Texts, then any properly call'd Interpretation of the ſacred writings; and which proceed more from Unction in H. men, then from Illumination, and ſavour more the gift of Piety then of underſtanding; and therefore ſuch interpretations may very likely ſpring out of this kind of pray'r, as many other vaſt goods do; for,

for, whose sake it is deservedly esteem'd, when 'tis well govern'd. For, since the sensitive appetite is the immediate principle of action, and its greatest impediment when it does not obey; this pray'r, which accustoms it to good, and to spiritual objects, must needs mightily benefit the soul, as to Devotion and all pious works, especially such as concern the virtue of Religion; and by consequence, to ordering and duly moderating the active part of life, by the rule of Faith and Christian Piety.

CHAP. VI.

Of Probable Pray'r, or the middle Species *of Pray'r.*

§. 1. THere follows that pray'r, which so falls in the midst between the other two kinds, that it fobs them of the name, and is it self *alone* call'd *Pray'r* by the generality. The effect aim'd at by it is morally to establish the mind, or render it fixt, in

it desires of Beatitude, and of a life order'd to it: that it be unswayable but by very-rarely-happning occasions and perswasions not lightly met with; though, of its own Nature, 'tis not able to secure it absolutely. Our Treatise of it is to be divided into two. The first part shall enquire which is the best way of it: the later, explicate which is the usual. Again, we must assign its three members; which are in effect but materially, and accidentally distinguisht; for they differ little really, but are exercis'd each their several ways. These are Reading, Meditation, and Hearing others. For, the same motives may happen to a man that attends the benefiting his soul; either by his own in[illegible]ry, and then the cultivating them is call'd *Meditation*; or from another, that either speaks, or has spoken. He that speaks has his Auditor present: he that has spoken comes, by writing, to the knowledg of the absent, for the most part.

§. 2. Hence spring three forms of thinking; each worthy the name, so it be exercis'd for the end of Pray'r. But, the two which are from another case

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the thinker of a great deal of the difficulty and pains; which Meditation endeavours to recompence by the pleasure and consciousness of having done aright, and therefore uses to be esteem'd the chief. This must be common to them all, if duly perform'd; that they be congruous instruments for the expected effect. They ought, therefore, to be compos'd of efficacious motives. The matter, first, they are to work on, is somewhat of those things, the consideration whereof conduces to directing the life according to piety, or to Beatitude. These are some practical, others speculative. And, because the *desire of enjoying God* is the best and ultimate affection in this life; and those things which manifest Gods Attributes to us most excite to this; 'tis plain, the contemplation of speculatives is to be prefer'd before that of practicals. I say, in Nobleness; for, perhaps, if what is needful be consider'd, some practicals at least will be preferrable in respect of weak persons. But, that consideration will more belong to a particular discipline, then to this Treatise which is universal.

§. 3.

§. 3. Again, 'tis evident that, becauſe the diſcourſe of this pray'r is compos'd of probable arguments; whoſe nature 'tis that each ſeverally has ſeldome power to encline the will, but many amaſs'd together carry a great efficacy with them: this pray'r requires that many reaſons be aſſembled into one perſwaſion. Whence, he that prays thus is to ſift into the whole nature of the ſubject propos'd to him; that he may be able to perſwade himſelf ſteadily and prudently, either that the truth is ſo, or the action in queſtion is to be undertaken. And, becauſe 'tis more laborious to find theſe out ones-ſelf, then to own them when found out by others; therefore Reading and Hearing, in which his part that prays is only to accept the fruit of others pains, are better then Meditation. But, to make theſe become parts of pray'r, they muſt firſt be ſuppos'd to be concerning the ſame things as the pray'r it ſelf is; and the writing or Exhortation compos'd to affect the Readers or Hearers minds to the ſtudy or action of Chriſtian Life. Farther, that the Reader or Hearer apply to himſelf the things propos'd him either

either in the Book or Sermon; both by weighing the truth of the propolals, and comparing them with the proper neceſſity and condition of his own ſoul; which is beyond the Writers or Preachers power. But this weighing muſt be either out of the ſole force of the things ſaid or written, or at leaſt very few obvious things beſides; elſe 'twill become now no longer Reading and Hearing, but Meditation.

§. 4. Before entring into Prayer the perſon is briefly to conſider, or rather own and call to mind, that the work he goes about is the higheſt of humane operations. Beyond Military, or Civil, or Legiſlative Fortitude and Prudence: as which immediately works out for us Eternal Beatitude, to which all other things yield but a kind of material ſervice, and not comparable to this. 'Tis, therefore, a moſt ſerious action, and to be exercis'd with moſt ſerene and ſolid thoughts. His buſineſs is already known, *viz.* to find out, or lay togethet the reaſons found out by one's ſelf or others, which either diſcover ſome Myſtery, or action neceſſary, or at leaſt convenient to be done. The end

and fruit are those resolutions or conclusions, by which we advance our souls towards Beatitude. Consequently, 'tis plain, the body ought to be so disposed as it uses to be when the person turns his mind every way, in consulting by himself of his most serious affairs: which some do sitting, others walking, others even in Bed; every one according as suits best to his Nature. Those that are of a moist and heavy brain, are seldom fit for serious thinking in Bed; and, if they are sometimes, they commonly know not when this will happen to them. 'Tis quite contrary with them whose brain is dry and fiery: for, to these darkness and rest, and consequently lying in Bed is very commodious. The hour is to be chosen according to the persons occasions. If we consult the Nature of Time, a little before Sunset will be most convenient: for as the air uses to be calmest at that time of the day, because the exhalations neither ascend nor descend notably; so, a certain serenity of brain, fit for thinking, is apt to follow it: though the morning have other considerable advantages.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Of Preparation to Pray'r: and of the first kind of Pray'r.

§. 1. OUt of what has been said of Probable Pray'r may be judg'd, wherein the ordinary practise of the pious world goes right, or falls short. First, therefore, they commonly teach that three things are to be premis'd to Prayer: *viz.* Preparation of the matter, the Presence of God, and some Pray'r. And, as to this last, it depends on the pitch or learning of the person that prays. For, if he be one of those that think God is mov'd, and, as it were, chang'd by our pray'rs, and hears us then when we pray; 'tis conformable to these apprehensions that he should pray, and hope God will, with a special aid expressly obtain'd by force of his pray'r, assist him to pray. But, if he be a Divine, such as understands

that God has from all Eternity order'd causes duly (that is, that good things should happen to the good) and is not mov'd by our pray'r, farther then that it self renders us better, nor; objectively as it were, gives because he's ask'd; and that 'tis imperfection in our pray'r, to will the determining God to fit particular graces to special circumstances: For such a Divine 'tis not proper to premise a pray'r; but, to be as sollicitous as he can that the action he is to begin may be render'd the perfectest, leaving the rest to God.

§. 2. The Presence of God uses to be explicated two ways: One, signifying that he who prays ought to remember God sees how he behaves himself in his pray'r and other actions: Another way, that we should think God stands near us. In the first explication, this apprehension is conformable to those that consider God as conversing with men, and estimating our actions after a humane manner: and, to such discourses 'tis very available to propose to themselves this presence of God. But, to those Divines, who apprehend the Science of God is an eternal kind of thing, all

all whoſe effects are already committed to ſecond cauſes, 'twill be inconvenient to propoſe this kind of apprehenſion: ſince, their Science will ſuggeſt to them, that this notion of *Preſence* has no ſpecial influence on this operation, otherwiſe then as 'tis imperfectly apprehended by us, or through the ſuppoſition of ſome falſity coucht under our diſcourſe.

§. 3. The other explication aſſumes God to be moſt inwardly preſent to all things by way of Place, and therefore that he is circumfus'd about the perſon that prays, who is in him, as it were in a place. Which ſenſe, as erroneous and making God corporeal and diffus'd, is utterly contrary to Faith and Piety, and not a jot conducive to the prayers attention. For, except he apprehend God ſeeing and regarding us, what is to him that prays where he is? unleſs perhaps he be ſo petty and illiterate, that, by this preſence, he imagines God prepar'd to look on us, if he turn his eyes. Some imagine God exiſting as it were in their heart or ſoul: and, I believe, the more intelligent of them will thus expound it, to ſignifie that God reſides

sides in the soul, as it were its Mover, by Illuminations and Inspirations. But, this explication is reduc'd to the first: for, it includes that he sees what is done in our souls; and adds, that he is the Author of what is well done. But, this imagination supposes the soul to be in Grace; or, at least, in a disposition infus'd from above: which those very Divines themselves, for the most part, profess cannot be known. Then, it seems not to be the intention of the prayer, to enquire concerning what God acts upon his soul; but a certain presence which may keep him in reverence and fear to do what himself intends to perform.

§. 4. Lastly, as to preparation of the matter, if they mean nothing else but a designation of what they should imploy their thoughts about; 'tis so true, that it seems impossible for a prudent person, who designs to use this kind of prayer, to do otherwise. But, if its meaning be, that he who prays ought to take some pains to explicate the matter, I know not why 'tis not as much of the substance of the pray'r, as any other thought or discourse: Great account, too, they seem to make of a certain

Prelude,

Prelude, which they call *composing or correcting the place*, and they prescribe, at the beginning of the prayer, to form to ones self a certain devout semblance, suitable to the matter of the Meditation: for example, to propose to ones self a Mountain or Temple, wherein Christ may teach, or the B. Virgin be, and do what we design to think on. And, perhaps such imagination will seem to be both pious and profitable to women and children; for, it makes the time of the Meditation pass over with delight: but, to prudent men, whose discourse is not so short, but they reflect these things are only feigned and not true, they are neither; because such persons contemn Illusions, and such imaginations induce an apprehension as if the whole business of the Meditation were a kind of personated Stage-play, and, after the Meditation ended, themselves, as it were waked out of a Dream, in another world more serious and solid.

§. 5. But, to confess the truth, for the greatest part the very substance of the Meditation is of the same nature: for, you may see it designedly run into

sensitive affections, and place as it were the main force of the Meditation in them. Thus, if they be to think of our Saviours Passion, they labour to procure compassion of his griefs: if of his Nativity, they pursue certain tendernesses, either of the sensitive love or Indigences which the Infant suffers. And, that they do these things by design is plain; both from the precepts they give, and the preparatory pray'r, wherein they beg such favours as these; and from their form of Colloquy, which wholly consists of such like, for the most part, and is accounted the chief part and fruit of the Meditation. But, how much good these do may be understood from the common by-word, that *nothing dries sooner then a tear*. 'Tis true, that by much use these affections grow to be ready at hand, and impell the person chiefly, to visible effects and demonstrations; but withall to many acts of piety. Now, these; however they be, I go not about to reprehend: but allow them, with praise and commendation, to those they are fit for. What I have judg'd solid I have already propos'd above. Yet, I cannot sufficiently

ficiently admire how Divines, that understand such Fictions are but Falsities, should yet endure to make use of them for themselves, and propose them to be us'd by others as understanding as themselves: and think that Christian perfection, I mean that which S. *Paul* calls *Wisdome to be spoken among the perfect*, is plac'd in such like things.

§. 6. The third, or rather first and chief *Species* of pray'r is both the shortest and difficultest. The exercise of it consists herein, that the person that prays set one reason, but that an efficacious and irrefragable one, before his consideration: that he revolve long and attentively the evidence of it: and at length apply the consequence to his pray'r. The whole labour is, that he may not only see the truth speculatively, but sink and root it in his soul: which is done by two considerations. The first, that the truth propos'd be perceiv'd clearly and indubitably: The other, that to cultivate this truth, and have it for a rule of operation is plainly seen to be supremely profitable, or rather necessary, to the person that prays. If these two be thorowly fixt in

in the soul, and by serious repetition, wrought into its substance, such a truth cannot but issue out into fruit, and render the life conformable to it. When, in this pray'r, a clear sight of the truth is exacted, 'tis not presently to be understood, that the Science of it must be deriv'd from things primarily evident to our understanding, and self-known, though this be the best, when it may be had: but, that it be deriv'd clearly from some indubitable principle; such as is whatever clearly shews it self in the Catholick Faith. For, such evidence fixes unshakably a faithful soul, and is a secure principle of action. This pray'r, compar'd to the former, seems some such thing, as if one should propose to himself, for the matter of his pray'r, the Oration of S. *Basil* concerning Fasting, or that of S. *Chrysostom* concerning pray'r, compendiated: and another should represent to himself the *Corpus* of an Article out of S. *Thomas*, for the same exercise.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

Of those things which conduce to the constancy of Pray'r.

§. 1. THE nature of Consideration, prerequir'd to Christian action, being in some sort declar'd, we are to advance to Execution: which is, of those things that are commanded or commended in the consideration or pray'r. And, because Pray'r it self is the chief of the things to be done; the same words, in a manner, must be said over again: and our discourse again divided, to treat, first, concerning the Execution of pray'r it self, and subjoyn then the Execution of the other virtues prescrib'd by pray'r. Pray'r, therefore, subject to Execution, is twofold: Ordinary, and Extraordinary. That is to be call'd Ordinary, which is to direct our whole life and every of our actions almost: which is, as it were continually, in the soul, either by it self

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or virtually, whereby we moderate and direct our actions; whether it have a ſpecial hour or more every day aſſign'd it, or, as is otherwiſe declared, in men of buſineſs, be perpetuated all the day long, by the ſame act repeated. Extraordinary Pray'r is ſo call'd, when one betakes himſelf to retirement from the tumult of buſineſs for a good while, to be more ſtrongly intent to Pray'r.

S. 2. About Execution two things are to be examin'd: *viz.* what is to be done to keep the perſon that prays from waxing weary, and intermitting or laying aſide his pray'r; and again, when he prays, and is diligent at it, what is to be obſerv'd that, as far as ſtands with humane imbecillity, he may go through with it with greateſt advantage. That pray'r may not be intermitted or omitted, he that is jealous of himſelf muſt either make uſe of neceſſity or pleaſure: for, by theſe two humane action is render'd laſting. And, neceſſity is either exteriour or interiour. Exteriour, when he obliges himſelf by profeſſing his exerciſe before others, who may eaſily know whether he performs them or not: for,

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then, others opinion of him ſpurs him on to perform what he has promiſed. This is done more efficaciouſly, if he enter into ſome Society; where, by force of Cuſtomes and the vigilance of Overſeers, he may be ſtrictlier ty'd to it. Interiour neceſſity riſes from the conſideration of the Merits of pray'r: whilſt he that prays ſees that pray'r is, as it were, his life and very hope of Eternity; and that, as much as he is deficient in that, ſo much the more uncertain and frail he makes his Election to Beatitude. For, man, not by every action whatever, but by ſuch as proceed from ſetled and right judgments, is properly ſaid to advance towards his end; other actions being rather diſpoſitions then true advancements. There are ſome, too, who, by ſtrong promiſes or ev'n vows, and a ſpontaneous impoſition of puniſhments, devote themſelves to it; at leaſt for a certain time, and in ſome dangerous occaſions.

§. 3. Pleaſure riſing from pray'r is threefold. The loweſt kind, though the moſt ſenſible and eſteem'd, and deſir'd by the imperfect, is that which riſes from the application of the ſenſitive ap-

appetite, and draws into Extasies and Rapts, and raises the soul to communicate with separated spirits, and to Visions and Revelations. And, some spiritual Masters account it the top of Christian perfection: but, the more penetrative plainly say it belongs not at all to Sanctity, but to Graces *freely-given*; though some degree of Sanctity is commonly the occasion of these affections, and the pleasure following them. The second pleasure is that which follows knowledge, whether seeming or demonstrative: and it may rise either from the things known, or the very knowing. For, the knowledge of those things which concern a man, *viz.* such as are about his state in this present life or in the future, as to hope, cannot but yield him solid joy, if they go on prosperously with him. In like manner, as the seeing clearly what one is to do every day affords great tranquility to the soul; so, for the most part, it carries its satisfaction along with it. Moreover, to contemplate the highest Mysteries; how, on the one side, they are most perfectly conformable to the whole *Series* of Nature; on the other, com-

comprehended and propos'd in such familiar terms, that they would make one suspect nothing less, then that they could be reconcil'd with nature; strikes one with such an amazement, that it exceeds almost all the delectation of Science.

§. 4. The third pleasure is, when the pray'r seems to have gone ill, so that nothing new has occurr'd in the contemplation, no sweetness been felt in the affection: for, then, the prudent Contemplatour comforts himself in the consciousness to have done as he ought: knowing that he has fought a combat, and from the labour of this fight there will arise, at another time, an unexpected facility: and, that he has profited himself more by his holding out, then if it had succeeded to his wish. For, in such battles Nature is subdu'd, and strongly bent to obey the commands of reason; though the effect appear not yet. But this pleasure is to be acquir'd by industry and thinking; the others of themselves follow their suitable actions, whose being but admitted is enough for them to confirm the Soul.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

Of avoiding Distractions.

§. 1. WHen there is no danger of Omission, and the person with alacrity betakes himself to pray; he must have a care to execute it well; wherein the first thing is, that he pray all the while, that is, suffer none or very little distractions. Now, distractions very often proceed from the person himself that prays: and are caus'd either by Nature, or some habit, or some actual disposition. They arise from Nature, when the Ayr is not favourable; but, either clogs the brain, so that the Fantasms cannot play duly, nor stir up spiritual conceits, but only heavy and corporeal ones, (and the same happens sometimes through intemperance in Meat or Drink:) or, on the contrary, otherwhiles, the Fantasms are agitated with so swift a motion, that they leave no room for making a solid judgment, or for mature consideration.

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Diſtractions ſpring from habits both intellectual and moral. For, one that accuſtomes himſelf much to ſpeculations, eaſily falls into them, ev'n againſt his will, and not reflecting that he's engag'd in them. As they alſo in whom the deſires of temporal things are not enough mortifi'd, eaſily fall into thoughts concerning them. For, the diſpoſition of the ſenſitive part as eaſily ſets perſons unawares a thinking when they are awake, as dreaming when they are aſleep; eſpecially if the will contribute its faultineſs, too. Laſtly, if either any care or paſſion, whoſe occaſion is freſh and preſſing, aſſail; 'tis hard to carry on a calm and undiſturb'd pray'r.

§. 2. Remedies, therefore, to theſe diſtractions are to be ſought, partly in the cauſes, partly in the effect or operation it ſelf. The cure of habitual cauſes is common; unleſs, perhaps, among the cauſes Tepidity in coming to prayer be reck'ned: which is kindled as it were, by the thought of the neceſſity and profit of it; explicated above, *Ch.* 7. §. 6. The ſame thought is to be oppos'd againſt the hurries of actual buſineſs

ſineſs or paſſion. Nature we are not able to amend, ſave in the very operation; nor is any thing elſe to be done in it, but fixing our thought by extrinſecal objects: for example, by reading over and over the matter it ſelf, if we have it in writing, and examining the ſeveral ſentences, or ev'n words; or (if we have a Book that opens and treats the matter it ſelf) by looking on that and ſtopping, to ruminate, at the ſeveral periods; till either the mind feel it ſelf fit for thinking, or the prefixed time be ſpent in ſuch exerciſe.

§. 3. Twill avail, alſo, diſtracted perſons to attempt writing what they deſire to think, or ev'n to frame by themſelves a diſcourſe to ſome friend that needs the ſame advice. For, I know not how, becauſe our nature is, by our ſenſes and appetite, turn'd to things without us, thoſe are more acceptable to it which it does with ſuch direction. But, they muſt always remember at the end, to apply to themſelves what they ſeem'd to prepare for others.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

Of Extraordinary Pray'r, or that of Exerciſes.

§. 1. EXtraordinary pray'r may be exercis'd two ſeveral ways. One, deſigning the pray'r it ſelf, or the preſent fruit for the end of the operation; as S. *Francis* and S. *Charles Borromæus* are reported to have retir'd apart for forty daies, to contemplate the Paſſion of our Lord. Theſe are mov'd by a ſpirit above all preſcriptions, and have a guide of their own. Others chuſe a diſcontinu'd ſolitude, to look into and amend themſelves. Let us firſt look into the matter it ſelf, and then a judgment may be given more diſcreetly of this way.

§. 2. And, as for the thing, it ſeems to be a certain Method, how God may be conſulted in difficult affairs, and of very great moment. An excellent deſign, indeed. But, *to conſult God* is differently underſtood, according to the

divers ſorts of Piety. For, by ſome, 'tis expected that, after their pray'rs and due preparation, God ſhould put into their ſoul a kind of immediate anſwer, whether by way of an inward Oracle or by way of Illumination; making it clearly be perceiv'd what is beſt to be done. Others endeavour to acquire a certain liberty of their ſoul from the oppreſſion of paſſions and wrong inclinations; and a certain ſerenity, whereby they may ſee purely the truths on all ſides of their action, ſo far forth as the preſent conditions of Nature will permit them to be ſeen by them, and is poſſible. The Exerciſes, therefore, of the former ought to conſiſt of thoſe things which are eſteem'd conducing to impetration: of the later, on the contrary, thoſe which purge the ſoul from paſſion, and render it governable by reaſon.

§. 3. The Exerciſes of the former muſt be compos'd of theſe following Conſiderations. Firſt of his ſins, both actual and habitual, or inclinations and facilities to ſin; by which he is render'd vile and unworthy to receive any favour from God. Secondly, how from his own Nature, he has nothing but (as

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ſuits the nothingneſs he is made of) a continual tendance to defect and ill; and from God alone, a proficiency or inclination towards good. Thirdly, how the Contingency of natural things is ſo great, that; by his own Science and Providence, he is not able to bring any action, little or great, to the end he prefixes to himſelf: but in all, and every one particularly, he depends on Chance and Fortune, that is, (in Chriſtian language) on the Divine Providence and Goodneſs. Fourthly, of the goodneſs and mercy of God; which is ſo conſpicuous in all, eſpecially humane works, that there's none in whom it may not ſtir hope, and confidence of recourſe to his help. Fiftly, of the mediation of Chriſt and Interceſſions of the Saints; which mightily confirm our hope. Sixthly, of the eminency of the End of humane nature, or Eternal Beatitude; to which we are born. Seventhly, of the miſery of thoſe who fall ſhort of this End of Nature; how horrid and intollerable it is. Eightly, of Death, how it ſevers us from all things we are accuſtom'd to, and tranſmits us to ſuch as we know not. Ninthly, how uncer-

tain we are of Gods Judgment, concerning us, and the event of it to our good or ill.

§. 4. When these have render'd him sollicitous concerning the business propos'd, he must descend to himself. And, first, the incertainty of humane life, in common, is to be consider'd; which is not long, and may end every day. Secondly, how many miseries, and difficulties, and distractions 'tis full of. Thirdly, how subject 'tis to fond desires, and sollicitudes springing from them. Fourthly, his own particular life is to be consider'd, how subject to occasions of sinning. Fifthly, whether it be the propereſt, all things consider'd, that belong to him, for attaining eternal life. Sixthly, how it may be amended and made better. Seventhly, the business particularly propos'd is to be consider'd; and such a habit of mind fram'd from the foregoing Considerations, as is apt to follow out of their application. Eighthly, God is earnestly to be sought, that he would vouchsafe to direct his consultation; that it may best succeed to his glory, and the profit of the persons own soul. Ninthly, he must actual-

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ly fall upon the deliberation it ſelf, and carry it on as far as he can. Tenthly, if it ſhall clearly appear what is fit, thanks are to be given to God. Eleventhly, with great conſtancy of mind a reſolution is to be taken, and the mind ſtrengthened to execute it. Twelfthly, if the truth ſhall not clearly appear, the conſcience is to be examin'd, whether any unfitting affection lurk there, which may hinder the inward light; and, if any be found, the intention is to be purifi'd. Thirteenthly, if nothing appears, God is to be thanked that the perſon who prays has done what in him lies, and humbly beſought that he would bleſs his endeavours as himſelf knows beſt.

§. 5. The exerciſes of the later ſort of men, are to conſiſt of thoſe things, which are apt to ſubject the ſoul to right reaſon. Firſt, the conſideration of the Laſt Good, how great and only ſuch it is. Secondly, of the miſery which accompanies the loſs of it. Thirdly, that the gaining or loſing it depends on the inſtant of Death, wherein ſuch as the ſoul is found it ſhall remain for ever; without any change ſave in receiving the body again: when, all the change is but addi-

addition and encrease in the same final and Master-affection. Fourthly, that the quality of the soul in death is generated regularly, out of those habits which the man has, by his own actions, wrought in himself during life: and that Death-bed repentance is very suspitious and doubtful, especially if predesign'd. Fifthly, that, to have good habits, there's requir'd a right judgment of the things of the future and present life: *viz.* that the future goods are absolutely such, and so to be lov'd; but the present meerly instrumental ones, and to be used only in order to the other. Sixthly, that these judgments ought by practise to have been made constant, and to have put on the nature of a habit, and induc'd it into our actions. Seventhly, he turns himself to his own soul, and examines what inclinations to temporals he feels in himself. Eighthly, he considers the matter to be consulted on, whether it have any affinity with those things to which he feels himself too much inclin'd. Ninthly, he discusses the thing that is to be done, out of its own proper principles. Tenthly, he particularly examines his own discussion, least it savor of those things to which he feels himself inclin'd; and, if he doubt, he strives his utmost to purge his Conclusion, and judge with a pure affection. Eleventhly, if he finds nothing to be corrected, he chearfully and hopefully falls to the execution.

§. 6. These Exercises may either be undertaken by persons of themselves that have fit Books, or prescrib'd by some Director; and the time to be spent in them be determin'd at eithers discretion. But, the end of the Exercises being, to establish and render constant the mind of the person that performs them; so much time is to be assign'd to the several parts of the Exercise, that there be nothing left incertain in the precedent, to hinder his adhering strongly to the things that follow; and this is to give measure to the parts. That the considerations be larger and more copious, according to the need of the Exerciser; and the Directors Book ought to have a great variety, that there may be choice for every one, according to his *genius* and capacity. And, the measure of the parts will of it self determine the space necessary for the whole Exercise, that the person may go off with the expected fruit.

FINIS.